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VOLUME VI

FRANCESCA OF RIMINI

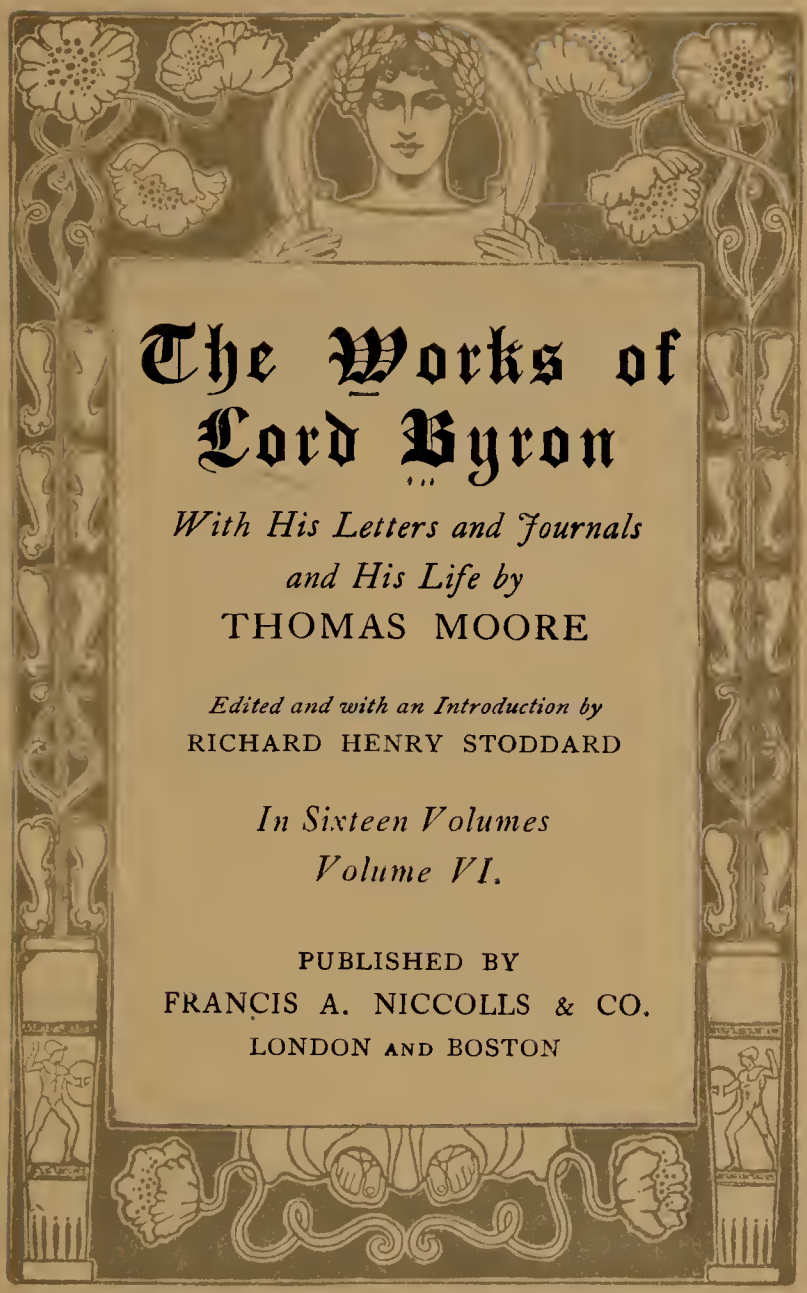
THE BLUES

MARINO FALIERO

THE VISION OF JUDGMENT, ETC.

"We read one day for pastime, seated nigh."

Photogravure from an original drawing by Frank T. Merrill.



The Works of Lord Byron

With His Letters and Journals
and His Life by
THOMAS MOORE

Edited and with an Introduction by
RICHARD HENRY STODDARD

In Sixteen Volumes
Volume VI.

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Francesca of Rimini

Prefatory Note

This translation, of what is generally considered the most exquisitely pathetic episode in the "Divina Commedia," was executed in March, 1820, at Ravenna, where, just five centuries before, and in the very house in which the unfortunate lady was born, Dante's poem had been composed.

In mitigation of the crime of Francesca, Boccaccio relates, that "Guido engaged to give his daughter in marriage to Lanciotto, the eldest son of his enemy, the master of Rimini. Lanciotto, who was hideously deformed in countenance and figure, foresaw that, if he presented himself in person, he should be rejected by the lady. He therefore resolved to marry her by proxy, and sent as his representative his younger brother, Paolo, the handsomest and most accomplished man in all Italy. Francesca saw Paolo arrive, and imagined she beheld her future husband. That mistake was the commencement of her passion. The friends of Guido addressed him in strong remonstrances, and mournful predictions of the dangers to which he exposed a daughter, whose high spirit would never brook to be sacrificed with impunity. But Guido was no longer in a condition to make war; and the necessities of the politician overcame the feelings of the father."

Francesca da Rimini[1]

Dante, l'Inferno

CANTO V.

Siede la terra dove nata fui
Su la marina, dove il Po discende,
Per aver pace coi seguaci sui.
Amor, che al cor gentil ratto s' apprende,
Prese costui della bella persona
Che mi fu tolta; e il modo ancor m' offende.
Amor, che a nullo amato amar perdona,
Mi prese del costui piacer si forte,
Che, come vedi, ancor non m' abbandona;
Amor condusse noi ad una morte:
Caina attende chi in vita ci spense:[2]
Queste parole da lor ci fur porte.
Da ch' io intesi quell' anime offense
Chinai il viso, e tanto il tenni basso
Fin che il Poeta mi disse: "Che pense?"
Quando risposi incominciai: "Ahi lasso!
Quanti dolci pensier, quanto desio
Menò costoro al doloroso passo!"

Francesca of Rimini

From the Inferno of Dante

CANTO V.

"THE land where I was born[3] sits by the seas,
Upon that shore to which the Po descends,
With all his followers, in search of peace.
Love, which the gentle heart soon apprehends,
Seized him for the fair person which was ta'en
From me, and me even yet the mode offends.
Love, who to none beloved to love again
Remits, seized me with wish to please, so strong,
That, as thou seest, yet, yet it doth remain.
Love to one death conducted us along,
But Cainà[4] waits for him our life who ended:"
These were the accents uttered by her tongue. —
Since I first listened to these souls offended,
I bowed my visage, and so kept it till —
"What think'st thou?" said the bard; when I unbended,
And recommenced: "Alas! unto such ill
How many sweet thoughts, what strong ecstasies
Led these their evil fortune to fulfil!"

Poì mi rivolsi a loro, e parlai io,
E cominciai: Francesca, i tuoi martiri
A lagrimar mi fanno tristo e pio.
Ma dimmi: al tempo de' dolci sospiri
A che, e come concedette Amore
Che conosceste i dubbiosi desiri?
Ed ella a me: nessun maggior dolore
Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
Nella miseria;[5] e ciò sa il tuo dottore.
Ma se a conoscer la prima radice
Del nostro amor tu hai cotanto affetto
Farò[6] come colui che piange e dice.
Noi leggevamo un giorno per diletto
Di Lancillotto,[7] come Amor lo strinse:
Soli eravamo, e senza alcun sospetto.
Per più fiate gli occhi ci sospinse
Quella lettura, e scolorocci il viso:
Ma solo un punto fu quel che ci vinse.
Quando leggemmo il disiato riso
Esser baciato da cotanto amante,
Questi, che mai da me non fia diviso,
La bocca mi baciò tutto tremante:
Galeotto fu il libro, e chi lo scrisse —
Quel giorno più non vi leggemmo avante.
Mentre che l' uno spirto questo disse,
L' altro piangeva sì che di pietade
Io venni men così com' io morisse,
E caddi come corpo morto cade.[8]

And then I turned unto their side my eyes,
And said, "Francesca, thy sad destinies
Have made me sorrow till the tears arise.
But tell me, in the season of sweet sighs,
By what and how thy love to passion rose,
So as his dim desires to recognise?"
Then she to me: "The greatest of all woes
Is to remind us of our happy days[9]
In misery, and that thy teacher knows.[10]
But if to learn our passion's first root preys
Upon thy spirit with such sympathy,
I will do even as he who weeps and says.[11]
We read one day for pastime, seated nigh,
Of Lancilot, how love enchained him too.
We were alone, quite unsuspiciously.
But oft our eyes met, and our cheeks in hue
All o'er discoloured by that reading were;
But one point only wholly us o'erthrew;[12]
When we read the long-sighed-for smile of her,
To be thus kissed by such devoted lover,[13]
He who from me can be divided ne'er
Kissed my mouth, trembling in the act all over.
Accursed was the book and he who wrote!
That day no further leaf we did uncover." ——
While thus one spirit told us of their lot,
The other wept, so that with pity's thralls
I swooned as if by death I had been smote,
And fell down even as a dead body falls.[14]

Stanzas to the Po

About the middle of April, 1819, Lord Bryon travelled from Venice to Ravenna, at which last city he expected to find the Countess Guiccioli. The following stanzas, which have been as much admired as any of the kind he ever wrote, were composed, according to Madame Guiccioli's statement, during this journey, and while Lord Byron was actually sailing on the Po. In transmitting them to England, in May, 1820, he says: "They must not be published: pray recollect this, as they are mere verses of society, and written upon private feelings and passions." They were first printed in 1824.

Stanzas to the Po

I.

River, that rollest by the ancient walls,[15]
Where dwells the lady of my love, when she
Walks by thy brink, and there perchance recalls
A faint and fleeting memory of me;

II.

What if thy deep and ample stream should be
A mirror of my heart, where she may read
The thousand thoughts I now betray to thee,
Wild as thy wave, and headlong as thy speed!

III.

What do I say — a mirror of my heart?
Are not thy waters sweeping, dark, and strong?
Such as my feelings were and are, thou art;
And such as thou art were my passions long.

IV.

Time may have somewhat tamed them, — not for ever;
Thou overflow'st thy banks, and not for aye

Thy bosom overboils, congenial river!
Thy floods subside, and mine have sunk away.

V.

But left long wrecks behind, and now again,
Borne in our old unchanged career, we move;
Thou tendest wildly onwards to the main,
And I — to loving *one* I should not love.

VI.

The current I behold will sweep beneath
Her native walls and murmur at her feet;
Her eyes will look on thee, when she shall breathe
The twilight air, unharmed by summer's heat.

VII.

She will look on thee, — I have looked on thee,
Full of that thought; and, from that moment, ne'er
Thy waters could I dream of, name, or see,
Without the inseparable sigh for her!

VIII.

Her bright eyes will be imaged in thy stream, —
Yes! they will meet the wave I gaze on now:
Mine cannot witness, even in a dream,
That happy wave repass me in its flow!

IX.

The wave that bears my tears returns no more:
Will she return by whom that wave shall sweep? —

Both tread thy banks, both wander on thy shore,
I by thy source, she by the dark-blue deep.

X.

But that which keepeth us apart is not
Distance, nor depth of wave, nor space of earth,
But the distraction of a various lot,
As various as the climates of our birth.

XI.

A stranger loves the lady of the land,
Born far beyond the mountains, but his blood
Is all meridian, as if never fanned
By the black wind that chills the polar flood.

XII.

My blood is all meridian; were it not,
I had not left my clime, nor should I be,
In spite of tortures, ne'er to be forgot,
A slave again of love, — at least of thee.

XIII.

'Tis vain to struggle — let me perish young —
Live as I lived, and love as I have loved;
To dust if I return, from dust I sprung,
And then, at least, my heart can ne'er be moved.

Stanzas

Written on the Road between Florence and Pisa [16]

I.

Oh, talk not to me of a name great in story;
The days of our youth are the days of our glory;
And the myrtle and ivy of sweet two-and-twenty
Are worth all your laurels, though ever so plenty.

II.

What are garlands and crowns to the brow that is wrinkled?
'Tis but as a dead-flower with May-dew besprinkled.
Then away with all such from the head that is hoary!
What care I for the wreaths that can *only* give glory?

III.

Oh, Fame! [17] — if I e'er took delight in thy praises,
'Twas less for the sake of thy high sounding phrases,
Than to see the bright eyes of the dear one discover
She thought that I was not unworthy to love her.

IV.

There chiefly I sought thee, *there* only I found thee;
Her glance was the best of the rays that surround thee;
When it sparkled o'er aught that was bright in my story,
I knew it was love, and I felt it was glory.

The Blues

A Literary Eclogue [18]

Nimium ne crede colori. — *Virgil.*

O trust not, ye beautiful creatures, to hue,
Though your *hair* were as *red*, as your *stockings* are *blue*

The Blues[19]

A Literary Eclogue

ECLOGUE FIRST.

London — Before the Door of a Lecture Room.

Enter TRACY, *meeting* INKEL.

Ink. You're too late.
Tra. Is it over?
Ink. Nor will be this hour.
But the benches are crammed, like a garden in flower,
With the pride of our belles, who have made it the fashion;
So, instead of "beaux arts," we may say "la *belle* passion"
For learning, which lately has taken the lead in
The world, and set all the fine gentlemen reading.
Tra. I know it too well, and have worn out my patience
With studying to study your new publications.

There's Vamp, Scamp, and Mouthy, and Words-
words and Co.[20]
With their damnable —
Ink. Hold, my good friend, do you know
Whom you speak to?
Tra. Right well, boy, and so does "the Row:"[21]
You're an author — a poet —
Ink. And think you that I
Can stand tamely in silence, to hear you decry
The Muses?
Tra. Excuse me: I meant no offence
To the Nine; though the number who make some
pretence
To their favours is such —— but the subject to
drop,
I am just piping hot from a publisher's shop,
(Next door to the pastry-cook's; so that when I
Cannot find the new volume I wanted to buy
On the bibliopole's shelves, it is only two paces,
As one finds every author in one of those places;)
Where I just had been skimming a charming
critique,
So studded with wit, and so sprinkled with Greek!
Where your friend — you know who — has just got
such a threshing,
That it is, as the phrase goes, extremely "*refresh-
ing.*"[22]
What a beautiful word!
Ink. Very true; 'tis so soft
And so cooling — they use it a little too oft;

And the papers have got it at last — but no matter.
So they've cut up our friend then?

Tra. Not left him a tatter —
Not a rag of his present or past reputation,
Which they call a disgrace to the age and the nation.

Ink. I'm sorry to hear this! for friendship, you know ——
Our poor friend! — but I thought it would terminate so.
Our friendship is such, I'll read nothing to shock it.
You don't happen to have the Review in your pocket?

Tra. No; I left a round dozen of authors and others
(Very sorry, no doubt, since the cause is a brother's)
All scrambling and jostling, like so many imps,
And on fire with impatience to get the next glimpse.

Ink. Let us join them.

Tra. What, won't you return to the lecture?

Ink. Why, the place is so crammed, there's not room for a spectre.
Besides, our friend Scamp is to-day so absurd —

Tra. How can you know that till you hear him?

Ink. I heard
Quite enough; and, to tell you the truth, my retreat
Was from his vile nonsense, no less than the heat.

Tra. I have had no great loss then?

Ink. Loss! — such a palaver!
I'd inoculate sooner my wife with the slaver
Of a dog when gone rabid, than listen two hours
To the torrent of trash which around him he pours,
Pumped up with such effort, disgorged with such labour,
That —— come — do not make me speak ill of one's neighbour.

Tra. *I* make you!

Ink. Yes, you! I said nothing until
You compelled me, by speaking the truth ——

Tra. *To speak ill?*
Is that your deduction?

Ink. When speaking of Scamp ill,
I certainly *follow*, *not set* an example.
The fellow's a fool, an impostor, a zany.

Tra. And the crowd of to-day shows that one fool makes many.
But we two will be wise.

Ink. Pray, then, let us retire.

Tra. I would, but ——

Ink. There must be attraction much higher
Than Scamp, or the Jews' harp he nicknames his lyre,
To call *you* to this hotbed.

Tra. I own it — tis true —
A fair lady ——

Ink. A spinster?

Tra. Miss Lilac!

Ink. The Blue!
The heiress?
Tra. The angel!
Ink. The devil! why, man!
Pray get out of this hobble as fast as you can.
You wed with Miss Lilac! 'twould be your perdition:
She's a poet, a chymist, a mathematician.
Tra. I say she's an angel.
Ink. Say rather an *angle*.
If you and she marry, you'll certainly wrangle.[23]
I say she's a Blue, man, as blue as the ether.
Tra. And is that any cause for not coming together?
Ink. Humph! I can't say I know any happy alliance
Which has lately sprung up from a wedlock with science.
She's so learned in all things, and fond of concerning
Herself in all matters connected with learning,
That ——
Tra. What?
Ink. I perhaps may as well hold my tongue;
But there's five hundred people can tell you you're wrong.
Tra. You forget Lady Lilac's as rich as a Jew.
Ink. Is it miss or the cash of mamma you pursue?

Tra. Why, Jack, I'll be frank with you — something of both.
The girl's a fine girl.
Ink. And you feel nothing loth
To her good lady-mother's reversion; and yet
Her life is as good as your own, I will bet.
Tra. Let her live, and as long as she likes; I demand
Nothing more than the heart of her daughter and hand.
Ink. Why, that heart's in the inkstand — that hand on the pen.
Tra. A propos — Will you write me a song now and then?
Ink. To what purpose?
Tra. You know, my dear friend, that in prose
My talent is decent, as far as it goes;
But in rhyme ——
Ink. You're a terrible stick, to be sure.
Tra. I own it; and yet, in these times, there's no lure
For the heart of the fair like a stanza or two;
And so, as I can't, will you furnish a few?
Ink. In your name?
Tra. In my name. I will copy them out,
To slip into her hand at the very next rout.
Ink. Are you so far advanced as to hazard this?
Tra. Why,
Do you think me subdued by a Blue-stocking's eye,

So far as to tremble to tell her in rhyme
What I've told her in prose, at the least, as sublime?

Ink. *As sublime!* If it be so, no need of my Muse.

Tra. But consider, dear Inkel, she's one of the "Blues."

Ink. As sublime!—Mr. Tracy—I've nothing to say.
Stick to prose—As sublime!!—but I wish you good day.

Tra. Nay, stay, my dear fellow—consider—I'm wrong;
I own it; but, prithee, compose me the song.

Ink. *As* sublime!!

Tra. I but used the expression in haste.

Ink. That may be, Mr. Tracy, but shows damned bad taste.

Tra. I own it—I know it—acknowledge it—what
Can I say to you more?

Ink. I see what you'd be at:
You disparage my parts with insidious abuse,
Till you think you can turn them best to your own use.

Tra. And is that not a sign I respect them?

Ink. Why that
To be sure makes a difference.

Tra. I know what is what:
And you, who're a man of the gay world, no less

Than a poet of t'other, may easily guess
That I never could mean, by a word, to offend
A genius like you, and moreover my friend.
Ink. No doubt; you by this time should know what is due
To a man of —— but come — let us shake hands.
Tra. You knew,
And you *know*, my dear fellow, how heartily I,
Whatever you publish, am ready to buy.
Ink. That's my bookseller's business; I care not for sale;
Indeed the best poems at first rather fail.
There were Renegade's epics, and Botherby's plays,[24]
And my own grand romance ——
Tra. Had its full share of praise.
I myself saw it puffed in the "Old Girl's Review."[25]
Ink. What Review?
Tra. 'Tis the English "Journal de Trevoux;"[26]
A clerical work of our jesuits at home.
Have you never yet seen it?
Ink. That pleasure's to come.
Tra. Make haste then.
Ink. Why so?
Tra. I have heard people say
That it threatened to give up the *ghost* t'other day.
Ink. Well, that is a sign of some *spirit*.
Tra. No doubt.
Shall you be at the Countess of Fiddlecome's rout?

Ink. I've a card, and shall go: but at present, as soon
As friend Scamp shall be pleased to step down from the moon
(Where he seems to be soaring in search of his wits),
And an interval grants from his lecturing fits,
I'm engaged to the Lady Bluebottle's collation,
To partake of a luncheon and learned conversation:
'Tis a sort of reunion for Scamp, on the days
Of his lecture, to treat him with cold tongue and praise.
And I own, for my own part, that 'tis not unpleasant.
Will you go? There's Miss Lilac will also be present.

Tra. That "metal's attractive."

Ink. No doubt — to the pocket.

Tra. You should rather encourage my passion than shock it.
But let us proceed; for I think, by the hum ——

Ink. Very true; let us go, then, before they can come,
Or else we'll be kept here an hour at their levy,
On the rack of cross questions, by all the blue bevy.
Hark! Zounds, they'll be on us; I know by the drone
Of old Botherby's spouting ex-cathedrâ tone.
Ay! there he is at it. Poor Scamp! better join
Your friends, or he'll pay you back in your own coin.

Tra. All fair; 'tis but lecture for lecture.

Ink. That's clear.
But for God's sake let's go, or the Bore will be here.
Come, come: nay, I'm off. [*Exit* Inkel.
Tra. You are right, and I'll follow;
'Tis high time for a "*Sic me servavit Apollo.*" [27]
And yet we shall have the whole crew on our kibes,
Blues, dandies, and dowagers, and second-hand scribes,
All flocking to moisten their exquisite throttles
With a glass of Madeira at Lady Bluebottle's.
[*Exit* Tracy.

ECLOGUE SECOND.

An Apartment in the House of Lady Bluebottle. —*A Table prepared.*

Sir Richard Bluebottle *solus.*

Was there ever a man who was married so sorry?
Like a fool, I must needs do the thing in a hurry.
My life is reversed, and my quiet destroyed;
My days, which once passed in so gentle a void,
Must now, every hour of the twelve, be employed:
The twelve, do I say? — of the whole twenty-four,
Is there one which I dare call my own any more?
What with driving and visiting, dancing and dining,
What with learning, and teaching, and scribbling, and shining,
In science and art, I'll be cursed if I know

Myself from my wife; for although we are two,
Yet she somehow contrives that all things shall be done
In a style which proclaims us eternally one.
But the thing of all things which distresses me more
Than the bills of the week (though they trouble me sore)
Is the numerous, humourous, backbiting crew
Of scribblers, wits, lecturers, white, black, and blue,
Who are brought to my house as an inn, to my cost
—For the bill here, it seems, is defrayed by the host —
No pleasure! no leisure! no thought for my pains,
But to hear a vile jargon which addles my brains;
A smatter and chatter, gleaned out of reviews,
By the rag, tag, and bobtail, of those they call "BLUES;"
A rabble who know not —— But soft, here they come.
Would to God I were deaf! as I'm not, I'll be dumb.

Enter LADY BLUEBOTTLE, MISS LILAC, LADY BLUEMOUNT, MR. BOTHERBY, INKEL, TRACY, MISS MAZARINE, *and others*, *with* SCAMP *the Lecturer*, *etc.*

Lady Blueb. Ah! Sir Richard, good morning; I've brought you some friends.

Sir Rich. (*bows, and afterward aside.*) If friends, they're the first.

Lady Blueb. But the luncheon attends.
I pray ye be seated, "*sans cérémonie.*"
Mr. Scamp, you're fatigued; take your chair there, next me. [*They all sit.*

Sir Rich. (*aside.*) If he does, his fatigue is to come.

Lady Blueb. Mr. Tracy —
Lady Bluemount — Miss Lilac — be pleased, pray, to place ye;
And you, Mr. Botherby —

Both. Oh, my dear Lady,
I obey.

Lady Blueb. Mr. Inkel, I ought to upbraid ye:
You were not at the lecture.

Ink. Excuse me, I was;
But the heat forced me out in the best part — alas!
And when ——

Lady Blueb. To be sure it was broiling; but then
You have lost such a lecture!

Both. The best of the ten.

Tra. How can you know that? there are two more.

Both. Because
I defy him to beat this day's wondrous applause.
The very walls shook.

Ink. Oh, if that be the test,
I allow our friend Scamp has this day done his best.
Miss Lilac, permit me to help you; — a wing?
Miss Lil. No more, sir, I thank you. Who lectures next spring?
Both. Dick Dunder.
Ink. That is, if he lives.
Miss Lil. And why not?
Ink. No reason whatever, save that he's a sot.
Lady Bluemount! a glass of Madeira?
Lady Bluem. With pleasure.
Ink. How does your friend Wordswords, that Windermere treasure?
Does he stick to his lakes, like the leeches he sings,
And their gatherers, as Homer sung warriors and kings?
Lady Blueb. He has just got a place.
Ink. As a footman?
Lady Bluem. For shame!
Nor profane with your sneers so poetic a name.
Ink. Nay, I meant him no evil, but pitied his master;
For the poet of pedlers 'twere, sure, no disaster
To wear a new livery; the more, as 'tis not
The first time he has turned both his creed and his coat.
Lady Bluem. For shame! I repeat. If Sir George could but hear ——

Lady Blueb. Never mind our friend Inkel; we
all know, my dear,
'Tis his way.
Sir Rich. But this place ——
Ink. Is perhaps like friend Scamp's,
A lecturer's.
Lady Blueb. Excuse me — 'tis one in "the
Stamps:"
He is made a collector.[28]
Tra. Collector!
Sir Rich. How?
Miss Lil. What?
Ink. I shall think of him oft when I buy a new
hat:
There his works will appear ——
Lady Bluem. Sir, they reach to the Ganges.
Ink. I sha'n't go so far — I can have them at
Grange's.[29]
Lady Blueb. Oh, fie!
Miss Lil. And for shame!
Lady Bluem. You're too bad.
Both. Very good!
Lady Bluem. How good?
Lady Blueb. He means nought — 'tis his phrase.
Lady Bluem. He grows rude.
Lady Blueb. He means nothing; nay, ask him.
Lady Bluem. Pray, sir! did you mean
What you say?
Ink. Never mind if he did; 'twill be seen
That whatever he means won't alloy what he says.

Both. Sir!

Ink. Pray be content with your portion of praise;
'Twas in your defence.

Both. If you please, with submission,
I can make out my own.

Ink. It would be your perdition.
While you live, my dear Botherby, never defend
Yourself or your works; but leave both to a friend.
A propos — Is your play then accepted at last?

Both. At last?

Ink. Why I thought — that's to say — there had passed
A few green-room whispers, which hinted — you know
That the taste of the actors at best is so so.[30]

Both. Sir, the green-room's in rapture, and so's the committee.

Ink. Ay — yours are the plays for exciting our "pity
And fear," as the Greek says: for "purging the mind,"
I doubt if you'll leave us an equal behind.

Both. I have written the prologue, and meant to have prayed
For a spice of your wit in an epilogue's aid.

Ink. Well, time enough yet, when the play's to be played.
Is it cast yet?

Both. The actors are fighting for parts,
As is usual in that most litigious of arts.

Lady Blueb. We'll all make a party, and go the *first* night.

Tra. And you promised the epilogue, Inkel.

Ink. Not quite.
However, to save my friend Botherby trouble,
I'll do what I can, though my pains must be double.

Tra. Why so?

Ink. To do justice to what goes before.

Both. Sir, I'm happy to say, I have no fears on that score.
Your parts, Mr. Inkel, are ——

Ink. Never mind *mine;*
Stick to those of your play, which is quite your own line.

Lady Bluem. You're a fugitive writer, I think, sir, of rhymes?

Ink. Yes, ma'am; and a fugitive reader sometimes.
On Wordswords, for instance, I seldom alight,
Or on Mouthey, his friend, without taking to flight.

Lady Bluem. Sir, your taste is too common; but time and posterity
Will right these great men, and this age's severity
Become its reproach.

Ink. I've no sort of objection,
So I'm not of the party to take the infection.

Lady Blueb. Perhaps you have doubts that they ever will *take?*

Ink. Not at all; on the contrary, those of the lake
Have taken already, and still will continue
To take — what they can, from a groat to a guinea,
Of pension or place; — but the subject's a bore.
Lady Bluem. Well, sir, the time's coming.
Ink. Scamp! don't you feel sore?
What say you to this?
Scamp. They have merit, I own;
Though their system's absurdity keeps it unknown.
Ink. Then why not unearth it in one of your lectures?
Scamp. It is only time past which comes under my strictures.
Lady Blueb. Come, a truce with all tartness: — the joy of my heart
Is to see Nature's triumph o'er all that is art.
Wild Nature! — Grand Shakespeare!
Both. And down Aristotle!
Lady Bluem. Sir George[31] thinks exactly with Lady Bluebottle;
And my Lord Seventy-four,[32] who protects our dear Bard,
And who gave him his place, has the greatest regard
For the poet, who, singing of peddlers and asses,[33]
Has found out the way to dispense with Parnassus.
Tra. And you, Scamp! —
Scamp. I needs must confess I'm embarrassed.

Ink. Don't call upon Scamp, who's already so harassed
With old *schools*, and new *schools*, and no *schools*, and all *schools*.
Tra. Well, one thing is certain, that *some* must be fools.
I should like to know who.
Ink. And I should not be sorry
To know who are *not:* — it would save us some worry.
Lady Blueb. A truce with remark, and let nothing control
This "feast of our reason, and flow of the soul."
Oh! my dear Mr. Botherby! sympathise! — I
Now feel such a rapture, I'm ready to fly,
I feel so elastic — "*so buoyant — so buoyant!*" [34]
Ink. Tracy! open the window.
Tra. I wish her much joy on't.
Both. For God's sake, my Lady Bluebottle, check not
This gentle emotion, so seldom our lot
Upon earth. Give it way; 'tis an impulse which lifts
Our spirits from earth; the sublimest of gifts;
For which poor Prometheus was chained to his mountain.
'Tis the source of all sentiment — feeling's true fountain:
'Tis the Vision of Heaven upon Earth: 'tis the gas
Of the soul: 'tis the seizing of shades as they pass,

And making them substance: 'tis something divine: —

Ink. Shall I help you, my friend, to a little more wine?

Both. I thank you; not any more, sir, till I dine.

Ink. A propos — Do you dine with Sir Humphry[35] to-day?

Tra. I should think with *Duke* Humphry was more in your way.

Ink. It might be of yore; but we authors now look
To the knight, as a landlord, much more than the Duke.
The truth is, each writer now quite at his ease is,
And (except with his publisher) dines where he pleases.
But 'tis now nearly five, and I must to the Park.

Tra. And I'll take a turn with you there till 'tis dark.
And you, Scamp —

Scamp. Excuse me; I must to my notes,
For my lecture next week.

Ink. He must mind whom he quotes
Out of "Elegant Extracts."

Lady Blueb. Well, now we break up;
But remember Miss Diddle[36] invites us to sup.

Ink. Then at two hours past midnight we all meet again,
For the sciences, sandwiches, hock, and champagne!

Tra. And the sweet lobster salad!
Both. I honour that meal;
For 'tis then that our feelings most genuinely — feel.
Ink. True; feeling is truest *then*, far beyond question:
I wish to the gods 'twas the same with digestion!
Lady Blueb. Pshaw! — never mind that; for one moment of feeling
Is worth — God knows what.
Ink. 'Tis at least worth concealing
For itself, or what follows —— But here comes your carriage.
Sir Rich. (*aside*). I wish all these people were d——d with *my* marriage! [*Exeunt.*

Marino Faliero

Doge of Venice

An Historical Tragedy, in Five Acts

"Dux inquieti turbidus Adriæ." — HORACE.

On the original MS. sent from Ravenna, Lord Byron has written: "Begun April 4th, 1820 — completed July 16th, 1820 — finished copying August 16th–17th, 1820; the which copying makes ten times the toil of composing, considering the weather — thermometer 90 in the shade — and my domestic duties."

Preface

The conspiracy of the Doge Marino Faliero is one of the most remarkable events in the annals of the most singular government, city, and people of modern history. It occurred in the year 1355. Everything about Venice is, or was, extraordinary, — her aspect is like a dream, and her history is like a romance. The story of this Doge is to be found in all her chronicles, and particularly detailed in the "Lives of the Doges," by Marin Sanuto, which is given in the appendix. It is simply and clearly related, and is perhaps more dramatic in itself than any scenes which can be founded upon the subject.

Marino Faliero appears to have been a man of talents and of courage. I find him commander in chief of the land forces at the siege of Zara, where he beat the King of Hungary and his army of eighty thousand men, killing eight thousand men, and keeping the besieged at the same time in check; an exploit to which I know none similar in history, except that of Cæsar at Alesia, and of Prince Eugene at Belgrade. He was afterward commander of the fleet in the same war. He took Capo d'Istria. He was ambassador at Genoa and Rome, — at which last he received the news of his election to the dukedom; his absence being a proof that he sought it by no intrigue, since he was apprised of his predecessor's death and his own succession at the same moment. But he appears to have been of an ungovernable temper. A story is told by Sanuto, of his having, many years before, when podesta

and captain at Treviso, boxed the ears of the bishop, who was somewhat tardy in bringing the Host. For this, honest Sanuto "saddles him with a judgment," as Thwackum did Square; but he does not tell us whether he was punished or rebuked by the Senate for this outrage at the time of its commission. He seems, indeed, to have been afterward at peace with the Church, for we find him ambassador at Rome, and invested with the fief of Val di Marino, in the march of Treviso, and with the title of count, by Lorenzo, Count-bishop of Ceneda. For these facts my authorities are Sanuto, Vettor Sandi, Andrea Navagero, and the account of the siege of Zara, first published by the indefatigable Abate Morelli, in his "Monumenti Veneziani di varia Letteratura," printed in 1796, all of which I have looked over in the original language. The moderns, Darù, Sismondi, and Laugier, nearly agree with the ancient chroniclers. Sismondi attributes the conspiracy to his *jealousy;* but I find this nowhere asserted by the national historians. Vettor Sandi, indeed, says that "Altri scrissero che . . . dalla gelosa suspizion di esso Doge siasi fatto (Michel Steno) staccar con violenza," etc.; but this appears to have been by no means the general opinion, nor is it alluded to by Sanuto or by Navagero; and Sandi himself adds, a moment after, that "per altre Veneziane memorie traspiri, che non il *solo* desiderio di vendetta lo dispose alla congiura ma anche la innata abituale ambizion sua, per cui anelava a farsi principe independente." The first motive appears to have been excited by the gross affront of the words written by Michel Steno on the ducal chair, and by the light and inadequate sentence of the Forty on the offender, who was one of their "tre Capi." The attentions of Steno himself appear to have been directed toward one of her damsels, and not to the "Dogaressa" herself, against whose fame not the slightest insinuation appears, while she is praised for her beauty and remarked

for her youth. Neither do I find it asserted (unless the hint of Sandi be an assertion) that the Doge was actuated by jealousy of his wife; but rather by respect for her, and for his own honour, warranted by his past services and present dignity.

I know not that the historical facts are alluded to in English, unless by Doctor Moore in his "View of Italy." His account is false or flippant, full of stale jests about old men and young wives, and wondering at so great an effect from so slight a cause. How so acute and severe an observer of mankind as the author of "Zeluco" could wonder at this is inconceivable. He knew that a basin of water spilt on Mrs. Masham's gown deprived the Duke of Marlborough of his command, and led to the inglorious peace of Utrecht — that Louis XIV. was plunged into the most desolating wars, because his minister was nettled at his finding fault with a window, and wished to give him another occupation — that Helen lost Troy — that Lucretia expelled the Tarquins from Rome — and that Cava brought the Moors to Spain — that an insulted husband led the Gauls to Clusium, and thence to Rome — that a single verse of Frederick II. of Prussia on the Abbé de Bernis, and a jest on Madame de Pompadour, led to the battle of Rosbach [87] — that the elopement of Dearbhorgil with Mac Murchad conducted the English to the slavery of Ireland — that a personal pique between Marie Antoinette and the Duke of Orleans precipitated the first expulsion of the Bourbons — and, not to multiply instances, that Commodus, Domitian, and Caligula fell victims, not to their public tyranny, but to private vengeance — and that an order to make Cromwell disembark from the ship in which he would have sailed to America destroyed both king and commonwealth. After these instances, on the least reflection, it is indeed extraordinary in Doctor Moore to seem surprised that a man used to command, who had served and

swayed in the most important offices, should fiercely resent, in a fierce age, an unpunished affront, the grossest that can be offered to a man, be he prince or peasant. The age of Faliero is little to the purpose, unless to favour it.

> "The young man's wrath is like straw on fire,
> *But like red hot steel is the old man's ire.*"

> "Young men soon give and soon forget affronts,
> Old age is slow at both."

Laugier's reflections are more philosophical:

"Tale fù il fine ignominioso di un' uomo, che la sua nascità, la sua età, il suo carattere dovevano tener lontano dalle passioni produttrici di grandi delitti. I suoi *talenti* per lungo tempo esercitati ne' maggiori impieghi, la sua capacità sperimentata ne' governi e nelle ambasciate, gli avevano acquistato la stima e la fiducia de' cittadini, ed avevano uniti i suffragj per collocarlo alla testa della republica. Innalzato ad un grado che terminava gloriosamente la sua vita, il risentimento di un' ingiuria leggiera insinuò nel suo cuore tal veleno che bastò a corrompere le antiche sue qualità, e a condurlo al termine dei scellerati; serio esempio, che prova *non esservi età, in cui la prudenza umana sia sicura, e che nell' uomo restano sempre passioni capaci a disonorarlo, quando non invigili sopra se stesso.*" [38]

Where did Doctor Moore find that Marino Faliero begged his life? I have searched the chroniclers, and find nothing of the kind; it is true that he avowed all. He was conducted to the place of torture, but there is no mention made of any application for mercy on his part; and the very circumstance of their having taken him to the rack seems to argue anything but his having shown a want of firmness, which would doubtless have been also mentioned by those minute historians, who by no means favour him: such, indeed, would be contrary to his character as a soldier, to the age in which he lived, and *at* which he died,

as it is to the truth of history. I know no justification, at any distance of time, for calumniating an historical character: surely truth belongs to the dead, and to the unfortunate; and they who have died upon a scaffold have generally had faults enough of their own, without attributing to them that which the very incurring of the perils which conducted them to their violent death renders, of all others, the most improbable. The black veil which is painted over the place of Marino Faliero amongst the Doges, and the Giants' Staircase where he was crowned, and discrowned, and decapitated, struck forcibly upon my imagination, as did his fiery character and strange story. I went, in 1819, in search of his tomb more than once to the church San Giovanni e San Paolo; and, as I was standing before the monument of another family, a priest came up to me and said, "I can show you finer monuments than that." I told him that I was in search of that of the Faliero family, and particularly of the Doge Marino's. "Oh," said he, "I will show it you;" and conducting me to the outside, pointed out a sarcophagus in the wall with an illegible inscription. He said that it had been in a convent adjoining, but was removed after the French came, and placed in its present situation; that he had seen the tomb opened at its removal; there were still some bones remaining, but no positive vestige of the decapitation. The equestrian statue of which I have made mention in the third act as before that church is not, however, of a Faliero, but of some other now obsolete warrior, although of a later date. There were two other Doges of this family prior to Marino: Ordelafo, who fell in battle at Zara in 1117 (where his descendant afterward conquered the Huns), and Vital Faliero, who reigned in 1082. The family, originally from Fano, was of the most illustrious in blood and wealth in the city of once the most wealthy and still the most ancient families in Europe. The

length I have gone into on this subject will show the interest I have taken in it. Whether I have succeeded or not in the tragedy, I have at least transferred into our language an historical fact worthy of commemoration.

It is now four years that I have meditated this work; and before I had sufficiently examined the records, I was rather disposed to have made it turn on a jealousy in Faliero.[39] But, perceiving no foundation for this in historical truth, and aware that jealousy is an exhausted passion in the drama, I have given it a more historical form. I was, besides, well advised by the late Matthew Lewis on that point, in talking with him of my intention at Venice in 1817. "If you make him jealous," said he, "recollect that you have to contend with established writers, to say nothing of Shakespeare, and an exhausted subject; — stick to the old fiery Doge's natural character, which will bear you out, if properly drawn; and make your plot as regular as you can." Sir William Drummond gave me nearly the same counsel. How far I have followed these instructions, or whether they have availed me, is not for me to decide. I have had no view to the stage; in its present state it is, perhaps, not a very exalted object of ambition; besides, I have been too much behind the scenes to have thought it so at any time.[40] And I cannot conceive any man of irritable feeling putting himself at the mercies of an audience. The sneering reader, and the loud critic, and the tart review, are scattered and distant calamities; but the trampling of an intelligent or of an ignorant audience on a production which, be it good or bad, has been a mental labour to the writer, is a palpable and immediate grievance, heightened by a man's doubt of their competency to judge, and his certainty of his own imprudence in electing them his judges. Were I capable of writing a play which could be deemed stage-worthy, success would give me no pleasure, and failure great pain. It is for this reason that,

even during the time of being one of the committee of one of the theatres, I never made the attempt, and never will.[41] But surely there is dramatic power somewhere, where Joanna Baillie,[42] and Millman,[43] and John Wilson,[44] exist. The "City of the Plague" and the "Fall of Jerusalem" are full of the best "*materiel*" for tragedy that has been seen since Horace Walpole, except passages of Ethwald and De Montfort. It is the fashion to underrate Horace Walpole; firstly, because he was a nobleman, and secondly, because he was a gentleman; but to say nothing of the composition of his incomparable letters, and of the "Castle of Otranto," he is the "Ultimus Romanorum," the author of the "Mysterious Mother," a tragedy of the highest order, and not a puling love-play. He is the father of the first romance and of the last tragedy in our language, and surely worthy of a higher place than any living writer, be he who he may.[45]

In speaking of the drama of "Marino Faliero," I forgot to mention, that the desire of preserving, though still too remote, a nearer approach to unity than the irregularity, which is the reproach of the English theatrical compositions, permits, has induced me to represent the conspiracy as already formed, and the Doge acceding to it; whereas, in fact, it was of his own preparation and that of Israel Bertuccio. The other characters (except that of the Duchess), incidents, and almost the time, which was wonderfully short for such a design in real life, are strictly historical, except that all the consultations took place in the palace. Had I followed this, the unity would have been better preserved; but I wished to produce the Doge in the full assembly of the conspirators, instead of monotonously placing him always in dialogue with the same individuals. For the real facts, I refer to the appendix.

Prefatory Note

Lord Byron finished the composition of this tragedy on the 17th July, 1820. He at the time intended to keep it by him for six years before sending it to the press; but resolutions of this kind are, in modern days, very seldom adhered to. It was published in the end of the same year; and, to the poet's great disgust, and in spite of his urgent and repeated remonstrances, was produced on the stage of Drury Lane Theatre early in 1821. The extracts from his letters given by Mr. Moore sufficiently explain his feelings on this occasion.

"Marino Faliero" was, greatly to his satisfaction, commended warmly for the truth of its adhesion to Venetian history and manners, as well as the antique severity of its structure and language, by that eminent master of Italian and classical literature, the late Ugo Foscolo. Mr. Gifford also delighted him by pronouncing it "English — genuine English." It was, however, little favoured by the contemporary critics. There was, indeed, only one who spoke of it as quite worthy of Lord Byron's reputation. "Nothing," said he, "has for a long time afforded us so much pleasure as the rich promise of dramatic excellence unfolded in this production of Lord Byron. Without question, no such tragedy as 'Marino Faliero' has appeared in English, since the day when Otway also was inspired to his masterpiece by the interests of a Venetian story and a Venetian conspiracy. The story of which Lord Byron has possessed

himself is, we think, by far the finer of the two, — and we say *possessed*, because we believe he has adhered almost to the letter of the transactions as they really took place." — The language of the Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviewers, Mr. Jeffrey and Bishop Heber, was in a far different strain. The former says:

"'Marino Faliero' has undoubtedly considerable beauties, both dramatic and poetical, and might have made the fortune of any young aspirant for fame; but the name of Byron raises expectations which are not so easily satisfied; and, judging of it by the lofty standard which he himself has established, we are compelled to say that we cannot but regard it as a failure, both as a poem and a play. This may be partly accounted for from the inherent difficulty of uniting these two sorts of excellence — of confining the daring and digressive genius of poetry within the forms and limits of a regular drama, and, at the same time, imparting its warm and vivifying spirit to the practical preparation and necessary details of a complete theatrical action. These, however, are difficulties with which dramatic adventurers have long had to struggle; and over which, though they are incomparably most formidable to the most powerful spirits, there is no reason to doubt that the powers of Lord Byron would have triumphed. The true history of his failure, therefore, we conceive, and the actual cause of his miscarriage on the present occasion, is to be found in the bad choice of his subject — his selection of a story which not only gives no scope to the peculiar and commanding graces of his genius, but runs continually counter to the master currents of his fancy. His great gifts are exquisite tenderness and demoniacal sublimity; the power of conjuring up at pleasure those delicious visions of love and beauty, and pity and purity, which melt our hearts within us with a thrilling and etherial softness — and of wielding, at the same time, that

infernal fire which blasts and overthrows all things with the dark and capricious fulminations of its scorn, rancour, and revenge. With the consciousness of these great powers, and as if in wilful perversity to their suggestions, he has here chosen a story which, in a great measure, excludes the agency of either; and resolutely conducted it, so as to secure himself against their intrusion; — a story without love or hatred — misanthropy or pity — containing nothing voluptuous and nothing terrific — but depending, for its grandeur, on the anger of a very old and irritable man; and, for its attraction, on the elaborate representations of conjugal dignity and domestic honour, — the sober and austere triumphs of cold and untempted chastity, and the noble propriety of a pure and disciplined understanding. These, we think, are not the most promising themes for any writer whose business is to raise powerful emotions; nor very likely, in any hands, to redeem the modern drama from the imputation of want of spirit, interest, and excitement. But for Lord Byron to select them for a grand dramatic effort, is as if a swift-footed racer were to tie his feet together at the starting, or a valiant knight to enter the lists without his arms. No mortal prowess could succeed under such disadvantages. — The story, in so far as it is original in our drama, is extremely improbable, though, like most other very improbable stories, derived from authentic sources: but, in the main, it is original; being, indeed, merely another 'Venice Preserved,' and continually recalling, though certainly without eclipsing, the memory of the first. Except that Jaffier is driven to join the conspirators by the natural impulse of love and misery, and the Doge by a resentment so outrageous as to exclude all sympathy, — and that the disclosure, which is produced by love in the old play, is here ascribed to mere friendship, — the general action and catastrophe of the two pieces are almost identical;

while, with regard to the writing and management, it must be owned that, if Lord Byron has most sense and vigour, Otway has by far the most passion and pathos; and that, though his conspirators are better orators and reasoners than the gang of Pierre and Reynault, the tenderness of Belvidere is as much more touching, as it is more natural, than the stoical and self-satisfied decorum of Angiolina."

After an elaborate disquisition on the *Unities* (a valuable one, undoubtedly, but too long to be extracted here), Bishop Heber thus concludes:

"We cannot conceive a greater instance of the efficacy of system to blind the most acute perception, than the fact that Lord Byron, in works avowedly and exclusively intended for the closet, has piqued himself on the observance of rules, which (be their advantage on the stage what it may) are evidently, off the stage, a matter of perfect indifference. The only object of adhering to the unities is to preserve the illusion of the scene. To the reader they are obviously useless. It is true that, in the closet, not only are their supposed advantages destroyed, but their inconveniences are also, in a great measure, neutralised: and it is true also, that poetry so splendid has often accompanied them, as to make us wholly overlook, in the blaze of greater excellences, whatever inconveniences result from them, either in the closet or the theatre. But even diminished difficulties are not to be needlessly courted, and though, in the strength and dexterity of the combatant, we soon lose sight of the cumbrous trappings by which he has chosen to distinguish himself; yet, if those trappings are at once cumbersome and pedantic, not only will his difficulty of success be increased, but his failure, if he fails, will be rendered the more signal and ridiculous.

"'Marino Faliero' has, we believe, been pretty generally pronounced a failure by the public voice, and we see no

reason to call for a revision of their sentence. It contains, beyond all doubt, many passages of commanding eloquence, and some of genuine poetry; and the scenes, more particularly, in which Lord Byron has neglected the absurd creed of his pseudo-Hellenic writers, are conceived and elaborated with great tragic effect and dexterity. But the subject is decidedly ill-chosen. In the main tissue of the plot, and in all the busiest and most interesting parts of it, it is, in fact, no more than another 'Venice Preserved,' in which the author has had to contend (nor has he contended successfully) with our recollections of a former and deservedly popular play on the same subject. And the only respect in which it differs is, that the Jaffier of Lord Byron's plot is drawn in to join the conspirators, not by the natural and intelligible motives of poverty, aggravated by the sufferings of a beloved wife, and a deep and well-grounded resentment of oppression, but by his outrageous anger for a private wrong of no very atrocious nature. The Doge of Venice, to chastise the vulgar libel of a foolish boy, attempts to overturn that republic of which he is the first and most trusted servant; to massacre all his ancient friends and fellow soldiers, the magistracy and nobility of the land. With such a resentment as this, thus simply stated and taken singly, who ever sympathised, or who but Lord Byron would have expected in such a cause to be able to awaken sympathy? It is little to the purpose to say that this is all historically true. A thing may be true without being probable; and such a case of idiosyncrasy as is implied in a resentment so sudden and extravagant is no more a fitting subject for the poet, than an animal with two heads would be for an artist of a different description.

"It is true that, when a long course of mutual bickering had preceded, when the mind of the prince had been prepared, by due degrees, to hate the oligarchy with which

he was surrounded and over-ruled, and to feel or suspect, in every act of the senate, a studied and persevering design to wound and degrade him, a very slight addition of injury might make the cup of anger overflow; and the insufficient punishment of Steno (though to most men this punishment seems not unequal to the offence) might have opened the last flood gate to that torrent which had been long gathering strength from innumerable petty insults and aggressions.

"It is also possible that an old man, dotingly fond of a young and beautiful wife, yet not insensible to the ridicule of such an unequal alliance, might for months or years have been tormenting himself with the suspected suspicions of his countrymen; have smarted, though convinced of his consort's purity, under the idea that others were not equally candid, and have attached, at length, the greater importance to Steno's ribaldry, from apprehending this last to be no more than an overt demonstration of the secret thoughts of half the little world of Venice.

"And we cannot but believe that, if the story of Faliero (unpromising as we regard it in every way of telling) had fallen into the hands of the barbarian Shakspeare, the commencement of the play would have been placed considerably earlier; that time would have been given for the gradual development of those strong lines of character which were to decide the fate of the hero, and for the working of those subtle but not instantaneous poisons which were to destroy the peace, and embitter the feelings, and confuse the understanding, of a brave and high-minded but proud and irritable veteran.

"But the misfortune is (and it is in a great measure, as we conceive, to be ascribed to Lord Byron's passion for the unities) that, instead of placing this accumulation of painful feelings before our eyes, even our ears are made very imperfectly acquainted with them. Of the previous

encroachments of the oligarchy on the ducal power we see nothing. Nay, we only hear a very little of it, and that in general terms, and at the conclusion of the piece; in the form of an apology for the Doge's past conduct, not as the constant and painful feeling which we ought to have shared with him in the first instance, if we were to sympathise in his views and wish success to his enterprise. The fear that his wife might be an object of suspicion to his countrymen is, in like manner, scarcely hinted at; and no other reason for such a fear is named than that which, simply taken, could never have produced it — a libel scribbled on the back of a chair. We are, therefore, through the whole tragedy, under feelings of surprise rather than of pity or sympathy, as persons witnessing portentous events from causes apparently inadequate. We see a man become a traitor for no other visible cause (however other causes are incidentally insinuated) than a single vulgar insult, which was more likely to recoil on the perpetrator than to wound the object; and we cannot pity a death incurred in such a quarrel."

The following extract from a letter of January, 1821, will show the author's own estimate of the piece thus criticised. After repeating his hope, that no manager would be so audacious as to trample on his feelings by producing it on the stage, he thus proceeds:

"It is too regular — the time, twenty-four hours — the change of place not frequent — nothing *melo*-dramatic — no surprises — no starts, nor trap-doors, nor opportunities 'for tossing their heads and kicking their heels' — and no *love*, the grand ingredient of a modern play. I am persuaded that a great tragedy is not to be produced by following the old dramatists, — who are full of gross faults, pardoned only for the beauty of their language, — but by writing naturally and *regularly*, and producing regular tragedies, like the Greeks; but not in imitation, — merely

the outline of their conduct, adapted to our own times and circumstances, and of course *no* chorus. You will laugh, and say, 'Why don't you do so?' I have, you see, tried a sketch in 'Marino Faliero;' but many people think my talent '*essentially undramatic*,' and I am not at all clear that they are not right. If 'Marino Faliero' don't fail — in the perusal — I shall, perhaps, try again (but not for the stage); and as I think that *love* is not the principal passion for tragedy (and yet most of ours turn upon it), you will not find me a popular writer. Unless it is love *furious*, *criminal*, and *hapless*, it ought not to make a tragic subject. When it is melting and maudlin, it *does*, but it ought not to do; it is then for the gallery and second price boxes. If you want to have a notion of what I am trying, take up a *translation* of any of the Greek tragedians. If I said the original, it would be an impudent presumption of mine; but the translations are so inferior to the originals that I think I may risk it. Then judge of the 'simplicity of plot,' and do not judge me by your old mad dramatists; which is like drinking usquebaugh, and then proving a fountain. Yet, after all, I suppose you do not mean that spirits is a nobler element than a clear spring bubbling up in the sun? and this I take to be the difference between the Greeks and those turbid mountebanks — always excepting Ben Jonson, who was a scholar and a classic. Or, take up a translation of Alfieri, and try the interest, etc., of these my new attempts in the old line, by *him* in English; and then tell me fairly your opinion. But don't measure me by YOUR OWN *old* or *new* tailor's yard. Nothing so easy as intricate confusion of plot and rant. Mrs. Centlivre, in comedy, has ten times the bustle of Congreve; but are they to be compared? and yet she drove Congreve from the theatre."

Again, February 16, he thus writes:

"You say the Doge will not be popular: did I ever

write for popularity? I defy you to show a work of mine (except a tale or two) of a popular style or complexion. It appears to me that there is room for a different style of the drama; neither a servile following of the old drama, which is a grossly erroneous one, nor yet *too* French, like those who succeeded the older writers. It appears to me that good English, and a severer approach to the rules, might combine something not dishonourable to our literature. I have also attempted to make a play without love; and there are neither rings, nor mistakes, nor starts, nor outrageous canting villains, nor melodrama in it. All this will prevent its popularity, but does not persuade me that it is *therefore* faulty. Whatever fault it has will arise from deficiency in the conduct, rather than in the conception, which is simple and severe.

"Reproach is useless always, and irritating — but my feelings were very much hurt, to be dragged like a gladiator to the fate of a gladiator by that '*retiarius*,' Mr. Elliston. As to his defence and offers of compensation, what is all this to the purpose? It is like Louis XIV. who insisted upon buying at any price Algernon Sydney's horse, and, on his refusal, on taking it by force, Sydney shot his horse. I could not shoot my tragedy, but I would have flung it into the fire rather than have had it represented."

The poet originally designed to inscribe this tragedy to his friend, the late Mr. Douglas Kinnaird; but the dedication, then drawn up, has remained till now in MS. It is in these words:

"To the Honourable Douglas Kinnaird.

"*My dear Douglas:* — I dedicate to you the following tragedy, rather on account of your good opinion of it, than from any notion of my own that it may be worthy of your acceptance. But if its merits were ten times greater than

they possibly can be, this offering would still be a very inadequate acknowledgment of the active and steady friendship with which, for a series of years, you have honoured

"Your obliged and affectionate friend,

"Byron."

At another moment, the poet resolved to dedicate this tragedy to Goethe, whose praises of "Manfred" had highly delighted him; but this dedication shared the fate of that to Mr. Kinnaird, — it did not reach the hands of Goethe till 1831, when it was presented to him at Weimar, by Mr. Murray, Jun.; nor was it printed at all, until Mr. Moore included it in his memoirs of Lord Byron. It is to be regretted that Mr. Moore, in doing so, omitted some passages, which, the MS. having since been lost, we cannot now restore. "It is written," he says, "in the poet's most whimsical and mocking mood; and the unmeasured severity poured out in it upon the two favourite objects of his wrath and ridicule, compels me to deprive the reader of some of its most amusing passages." The world are in possession of so much of Lord Byron's sarcastic criticisms on his contemporaries, and the utter recklessness with which he threw them off is so generally appreciated, that one is at a loss to understand what purpose could be served by suppressing the fragments thus characterised.

"To Baron Goethe,[46] etc.

"*Sir:* — In the appendix to an English work lately translated into German and published at Leipsic, a judgment of yours upon English poetry is quoted as follows: 'That in English poetry, great genius, universal power, a feeling of profundity, with sufficient tenderness and force, are to be found; but that *altogether these do not constitute poets*,' etc.

"I regret to see a great man falling into a great mistake. This opinion of yours only proves that the *Dictionary of ten thousand living English Authors* has not been translated into German. You will have read, in your friend Schlegel's version, the dialogue in Macbeth:

"'There are *ten thousand!*
Macbeth. *Geese,* villain?
Answer. *Authors,* sir.'

Now, of these 'ten thousand authors,' there are actually nineteen hundred and eighty-seven poets, all alive at this moment, whatever their works may be, as their booksellers well know: and amongst these there are several who possess a far greater reputation than mine, although considerably less than yours. It is owing to this neglect on the part of your German translators that you are not aware of the works of . . . . . .

. . . . . .

"There is also another, named . . . .

. . . . . .

"I mention these poets by way of sample to enlighten you. They form but two bricks of our Babel (WINDSOR bricks, by the way), but may serve for a specimen of the building.

"It is, moreover, asserted that 'the predominant character of the whole body of the present English poetry is a *disgust* and *contempt* for life.' But I rather suspect that, by one single work of *prose, you* yourself have excited a greater contempt for life, than all the English volumes of poesy that ever were written. Madame de Staël says that 'Werther has occasioned more suicides than the most beautiful woman;' and I really believe that he has put more individuals out of this world than Napoleon himself,—except in the way of his profession. Perhaps, illustrious sir, the acrimonious judgment passed by a celebrated

Northern journal upon you in particular, and the Germans in general, has rather indisposed you toward English poetry as well as criticism. But you must not regard our critics, who are at bottom good-natured fellows, considering their two professions — taking up the law in court, and laying it down out of it. No one can more lament their hasty and unfair judgment, in your particular, than I do; and I so expressed myself to your friend Schlegel, in 1816, at Coppet.

"In behalf of my 'ten thousand' living brethren, and of myself, I have thus far taken notice of an opinion expressed with regard to 'English poetry' in general, and which merited notice, because it was YOURS.

"My principal object in addressing you was to testify my sincere respect and admiration of a man, who, for half a century, has led the literature of a great nation, and will go down to posterity as the first literary character of his age.

"You have been fortunate, sir, not only in the writings which have illustrated your name, but in the name itself as being sufficiently musical for the articulation of posterity. In this you have the advantage of some of your countrymen, whose names would perhaps be immortal also — if anybody could pronounce them.

"It may, perhaps, be supposed, by this apparent tone of levity, that I am wanting in intentional respect toward you; but this will be a mistake: I am always flippant in prose. Considering you, as I really and warmly do, in common with all your own, and with most other nations, to be by far the first literary character which has existed in Europe since the death of Voltaire, I felt, and feel, desirous to inscribe to you the following work, — *not* as being either a tragedy or a *poem* (for I cannot pronounce upon its pretensions to be either one or the other, or both, or neither), but as a mark of esteem and admiration from a

foreigner to the man who has been hailed in Germany, 'THE GREAT GOETHE.'

"I have the honour to be, with the truest respect, your most obedient and very humble servant,

"BYRON.

"*Ravenna, 8bre 14°, 1820.*

"P. S. I perceive that in Germany, as well as in Italy, there is a great struggle about what they call '*Classical*' and '*Romantic*,' — terms which were not subjects of classification in England, at least when I left it four or five years ago. Some of the English scribblers, it is true, abused Pope and Swift, but the reason was that they themselves did not know how to write either prose or verse; but nobody thought them worth making a sect of. Perhaps there may be something of the kind sprung up lately, but I have not heard much about it, and it would be such bad taste that I shall be very sorry to believe it."

The illustrious Goethe was much gratified with this token of Lord Byron's admiration. He died at Weimar early in the present year (1832) — a year which has swept away so many of the great men of the European world — among others, Cuvier and Scott.

Dramatis Personæ

Men.

Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice.
Bertuccio Faliero, Nephew of the Doge.
Lioni, a Patrician and Senator.
Benintende, Chief of the Council of Ten.
Michel Steno, One of the three Capi of the Forty.
Israel Bertuccio, Chief of the Arsenal,
Philip Calendaro,
Dagolino,
Bertram,
} Conspirators.

Signor of the Night, { "Signore di Notte," one of the Officers belonging to the Republic.

First Citizen.
Second Citizen.
Third Citizen.
Vincenzo,
Pietro,
Battista,
} Officers belonging to the Ducal Palace.

Secretary of the Council of Ten.
Guards, Conspirators, Citizens, the Council of Ten, the Giunta, etc.

Women.

Angiolina, Wife to the Doge.
Marianna, her Friend.
Female Attendants, etc.

Scene: Venice — in the year 1355.

Marino Faliero

ACT I.

SCENE I.

An Antechamber in the Ducal Palace.

PIETRO *speaks, in entering, to* BATTISTA.

Pie. Is not the messenger returned?
Bat. Not yet;
I have sent frequently, as you commanded,
But still the Signory is deep in council,
And long debate on Steno's accusation.[47]
Pie. Too long — at least so thinks the Doge.
Bat. How bears he
These moments of suspense?
Pie. With struggling patience.[48]
Placed at the ducal table, covered o'er
With all the apparel of the state; petitions,
Despatches, judgments, acts, reprieves, reports,
He sits as rapt in duty;[49] but whene'er
He hears the jarring of a distant door,
Or aught that intimates a coming step,

Or murmur of a voice, his quick eye wanders,
And he will start up from his chair, then pause,
And seat himself again, and fix his gaze
Upon some edict; but I have observed
For the last hour he has not turned a leaf.

Bat. 'Tis said he is much moved, — and doubtless 'twas
Foul scorn in Steno to offend so grossly.

Pie. Ay, if a poor man: Steno's a patrician,
Young, galliard, gay, and haughty.[50]

Bat. Then you think
He will not be judged hardly?

Pie. 'Twere enough
He be judged justly; but 'tis not for us
To anticipate the sentence of the Forty.

Bat. And here it comes. — What news, Vincenzo?

Enter Vincenzo.

Vin. 'Tis
Decided; but as yet his doom's unknown:
I saw the president in act to seal
The parchment which will bear the Forty's judgment
Unto the Doge, and hasten to inform him. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Ducal Chamber.

MARINO FALIERO, *Doge; and his Nephew,* BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Ber. F. It cannot be but they will do you justice.

Doge. Ay, such as the Avogadori[51] did,
Who sent up my appeal unto the Forty
To try him by his peers, his own tribunal.

Ber. F. His peers will scarce protect him; such an act
Would bring contempt on all authority.

Doge. Know you not Venice? Know you not the Forty?
But we shall see anon.

Ber. F. (*addressing* VINCENZO, *then entering*) How now — what tidings?

Vin. I am charged to tell his highness that the court
Has passed its resolution, and that, soon
As the due forms of judgment are gone through,
The sentence will be sent up to the Doge;
In the meantime the Forty doth salute
The Prince of the Republic, and entreat
His acceptation of their duty.

Doge. Yes —
They are wond'rous dutiful, and ever humble.
Sentence is passed, you say?

Vin. It is, your highness:
The president was sealing it, when I
Was called in, that no moment might be lost
In forwarding the intimation due
Not only to the Chief of the Republic,
But the complainant, both in one united.

Ber. F. Are you aware, from aught you have perceived,
Of their decision?

Vin. No, my lord; you know
The secret custom of the courts in Venice.

Ber. F. True; but there still is something given to guess,
Which a shrewd gleaner and quick eye would catch at;
A whisper, or a murmur, or an air
More or less solemn spread o'er the tribunal.
The Forty are but men — most worthy men,
And wise, and just, and cautious — this I grant —
And secret as the grave to which they doom
The guilty; but with all this, in their aspects —
At least in some, the juniors of the number —
A searching eye, an eye like yours, Vincenzo,
Would read the sentence ere it was pronounced.

Vin. My lord, I came away upon the moment,
And had no leisure to take note of that
Which passed among the judges, even in seeming;
My station near the accused too, Michel Steno,
Made me ——

Doge. (*abruptly*) And how looked *he?* deliver that.

Vin. Calm, but not overcast, he stood resigned
To the decree, whate'er it were; — but lo!
It comes, for the perusal of his highness.

Enter the SECRETARY *of the Forty.*

Sec. The high tribunal of the Forty sends
Health and respect to the Doge Faliero,
Chief magistrate of Venice, and requests
His highness to peruse and to approve
The sentence passed on Michel Steno, born
Patrician, and arraigned upon the charge
Contained, together with its penalty,
Within the rescript which I now present.

Doge. Retire, and wait without.

Exeunt SECRETARY *and* VINCENZO.

Take thou this paper:
The misty letters vanish from my eyes;
I cannot fix them.

Ber. F. Patience, my dear uncle:
Why do you tremble thus? — nay, doubt not, all
Will be as could be wished.

Doge. Say on.

Ber. F. (*reading*) "Decreed
In council, without one dissenting voice,
That Michel Steno, by his own confession,
Guilty on the last night of Carnival
Of having graven on the ducal throne
The following words ——"[52]

Doge. Would'st thou repeat them?
Would'st *thou* repeat them — *thou*, a Faliero,
Harp on the deep dishonour of our house,
Dishonoured in its chief — that chief the prince
Of Venice, first of cities? — To the sentence.

Ber. F. Forgive me, my good lord; I will obey —
(*Reads*) "That Michel Steno be detained a month
In close arrest." [53]

Doge. Proceed.

Ber. F. My lord, 'tis finished.

Doge. How, say you? — finished! Do I dream?
— 'tis false —
Give me the paper — (*Snatches the paper and reads*) — "'Tis decreed in council
That Michel Steno" —— Nephew, thine arm!

Ber. F. Nay,
Cheer up, be calm; this transport is uncalled for —
Let me seek some assistance.

Doge. Stop, sir — Stir not —
'Tis past.

Ber. F. I cannot but agree with you
The sentence is too slight for the offence —
It is not honourable in the Forty
To affix so slight a penalty to that
Which was a foul affront to you, and even
To them, as being your subjects; but 'tis not
Yet without remedy: you can appeal
To them once more, or to the Avogadori,
Who, seeing that true justice is withheld,
Will now take up the cause they once declined,

And do you right upon the bold delinquent.
Think you not thus, good uncle? why do you stand
So fixed? You heed me not:—I pray you, hear me![54]

Doge. (*dashing down the ducal bonnet, and offering to trample upon it, exclaims, as he is withheld by his nephew*)

Oh! that the Saracen were in Saint Mark's!
Thus would I do him homage.

Ber. F. For the sake
Of Heaven and all its saints, my lord ——

Doge. Away!
Oh, that the Genoese were in the port!
Oh, that the Huns whom I o'erthrew at Zara
Were ranged around the palace!

Ber. F. 'Tis not well
In Venice' Duke to say so.

Doge. Venice' Duke!
Who now is Duke in Venice? let me see him,
That he may do me right.

Ber. F. If you forget
Your office, and its dignity and duty,
Remember that of man, and curb this passion.
The Duke of Venice ——

Doge. (*interrupting him*) There is no such thing—
It is a word — nay, worse — a worthless by-word:
The most despised, wronged, outraged, helpless wretch.
Who begs his bread, if 'tis refused by one,

May win it from another kinder heart;
But he, who is denied his right by those
Whose place it is to do no wrong, is poorer
Than the rejected beggar — he's a slave —
And that am I, and thou, and all our house,
Even from this hour; the meanest artisan
Will point the finger, and the haughty noble
May spit upon us: — where is our redress?

Ber. F. The law, my prince? ——

Doge. (*interrupting him*) You see what it has done —

I asked no remedy but from the law —
I sought no vengeance but redress by law —
I called no judges but those named by law —
As sovereign, I appealed unto my subjects,
The very subjects who had made me sovereign,
And gave me thus a double right to be so.
The rights of place and choice, of birth and service,
Honours and years, these scars, these hoary hairs,
The travel, toil, the perils, the fatigues,
The blood and sweat of almost eighty years,
Were weighed i' the balance, 'gainst the foulest stain,
The grossest insult, most contemptuous crime
Of a rank, rash patrician — and found wanting!
And this is to be borne!

Ber. F. I say not that: —
In case your fresh appeal should be rejected,
We will find other means to make all even.

Doge. Appeal again! art thou my brother's son?
A scion of the house of Faliero?

The nephew of a Doge? and of that blood
Which hath already given three dukes to Venice?
But thou say'st well — we must be humble now.

Ber. F. My princely uncle! you are too much moved: —
I grant it was a gross offence, and grossly
Left without fitting punishment: but still
This fury doth exceed the provocation,
Or any provocation: if we are wronged,
We will ask justice; if it be denied,
We'll take it; but may do all this in calmness —
Deep Vengeance is the daughter of deep Silence.
I have yet scarce a third part of your years,
I love our house, I honour you, its chief,
The guardian of my youth, and its instructor —
But though I understand your grief, and enter
In part of your disdain, it doth appal me
To see your anger, like our Adrian waves,
O'ersweep all bounds, and foam itself to air.

Doge. I tell thee — *must* I tell thee — what thy father
Would have required no words to comprehend?
Hast thou no feeling save the external sense
Of torture from the touch? hast thou no soul —
No pride — no passion — no deep sense of honour?

Ber. F. 'Tis the first time that honour has been doubted,
And were the last, from any other skeptic.

Doge. You know the full offence of this born villain,

This creeping, coward, rank, acquitted felon,
Who threw his sting into a poisonous libel,[55]
And on the honour of — Oh God! — my wife,
The nearest, dearest part of all men's honour,
Left a base slur to pass from mouth to mouth
Of loose mechanics, with all coarse foul comments,
And villanous jests, and blasphemies obscene;
While sneering nobles, in more polished guise,
Whispered the tale, and smiled upon the lie
Which made me look like them — a courteous wittol,
Patient — ay, proud, it may be, of dishonour.

Ber. F. But still it was a lie — you knew it false,
And so did all men.

Doge. Nephew, the high Roman
Said, "Cæsar's wife must not even be suspected,"
And put her from him.

Ber. F. True — but in those days ——

Doge. What is it that a Roman would not suffer,
That a Venetian prince must bear? Old Dandolo
Refused the diadem of all the Cæsars,
And wore the ducal cap I trample on,
Because 'tis now degraded.

Ber. F. 'Tis even so.

Doge. It is — it is; — I did not visit on
The innocent creature thus most vilely slandered
Because she took an old man for her lord,
For that he had been long her father's friend
And patron of her house, as if there were

No love in woman's heart but lust of youth
And beardless faces; — I did not for this
Visit the villain's infamy on her,
But craved my country's justice on his head,
The justice due unto the humblest being
Who hath a wife whose faith is sweet to him,
Who hath a home whose hearth is dear to him,
Who hath a name whose honour's all to him,
When these are tainted by the accursing breath
Of calumny and scorn.

Ber. F. And what redress
Did you expect as his fit punishment?

Doge. Death! Was I not the sovereign of the state —
Insulted on his very throne, and made
A mockery to the men who should obey me?
Was I not injured as a husband? scorned
As man? reviled, degraded, as a prince?
Was not offence like his a complication
Of insult and of treason? — and he lives!
Had he instead of on the Doge's throne
Stamped the same brand upon a peasant's stool,
His blood had gilt the threshold; for the carle
Had stabbed him on the instant.

Ber. F. Do not doubt it,
He shall not live till sunset — leave to me
The means, and calm yourself.

Doge. Hold, nephew: this
Would have sufficed but yesterday; at present
I have no further wrath against this man.

Ber. F. What mean you? is not the offence redoubled
By this most rank — I will not say — acquittal;
For it is worse, being full acknowledgment
Of the offence, and leaving it unpunished?

Doge. It is *redoubled*, but not now by him:
The Forty hath decreed a month's arrest —
We must obey the Forty.

Ber. F. Obey *them!*
Who have forgot their duty to the sovereign?

Doge. Why yes; — boy, you perceive it then at last:
Whether as fellow citizen who sues
For justice, or as sovereign who commands it,
They have defrauded me of both my rights
(For here the sovereign is a citizen);
But, notwithstanding, harm not thou a hair
Of Steno's head — he shall not wear it long.

Ber. F. Not twelve hours longer, had you left to me
The mode and means: if you had calmly heard me,
I never meant this miscreant should escape,
But wished you to suppress such gusts of passion,
That we more surely might devise together
His taking off.

Doge. No, nephew, he must live;
At least, just now — a life so vile as his
Were nothing at this hour; in th' olden time
Some sacrifices asked a single victim,
Great expiations had a hecatomb.

Ber. F. Your wishes are my law: and yet I fain
Would prove to you how near unto my heart
The honour of our house must ever be.
Doge. Fear not; you shall have time and place of proof:
But be not thou too rash, as I have been.
I am ashamed of my own anger now;
I pray you, pardon me.
Ber. F. Why that's my uncle!
The leader, and the statesman, and the chief
Of commonwealths, and sovereign of himself!
I wondered to perceive you so forget
All prudence in your fury at these years,
Although the cause ——
Doge. Ay, think upon the cause —
Forget it not: — When you lie down to rest,
Let it be black among your dreams; and when
The morn returns, so let it stand between
The sun and you, as an ill-omened cloud
Upon a summer-day of festival:
So will it stand to me; — but speak not, stir not, —
Leave it all to me; — we shall have much to do,
And you shall have a part. — But now retire,
'Tis fit I were alone.
Ber. F. (*taking up and placing the ducal bonnet on the table*) Ere I depart,
I pray you to resume what you have spurned,
Till you can change it haply for a crown.
And now I take my leave, imploring you
In all things to rely upon my duty

As doth become your near and faithful kinsman,
And not less loyal citizen and subject.
[*Exit* Bertuccio Faliero.

Doge. (*solus*) Adieu, my worthy nephew. —[56]
Hollow bauble! [*Taking up the ducal cap.*
Beset with all the thorns that line a crown,
Without investing the insulted brow
With the all-swaying majesty of kings;
Thou idle, gilded, and degraded toy,
Let me resume thee as I would a visor. [*Puts it on.*
How my brain aches beneath thee! and my temples
Throb feverish under thy dishonest weight.
Could I not turn thee to a diadem?
Could I not shatter the Briarean sceptre
Which in this hundred-handed senate rules,
Making the people nothing, and the prince
A pageant? In my life I have achieved
Tasks not less difficult — achieved for them,
Who thus repay me! — Can I not requite them?
Oh for one year! Oh! but for even a day
Of my full youth, while yet my body served
My soul as serves the generous steed his lord,
I would have dashed amongst them, asking few
In aid to overthrow these swoln patricians;
But now I must look round for other hands
To serve this hoary head; — but it shall plan
In such a sort as will not leave the task
Herculean, though as yet 'tis but a chaos
Of darkly brooding thoughts: my fancy is

In her first work, more nearly to the light
Holding the sleeping images of things
For the selection of the pausing judgment. —
The troops are few in ——

Enter VINCENZO.

Vin. There is one without
Craves audience of your highness.

Doge. I'm unwell —
I can see no one, not even a patrician —
Let him refer his business to the council.

Vin. My lord, I will deliver your reply;
It cannot much import — he's a plebeian,
The master of a galley, I believe.

Doge. How! did you say the patron of a galley?
That is — I mean — a servant of the state:
Admit him, he may be on public service.

[*Exit* VINCENZO.

Doge. (*solus*) This patron may be sounded; I will try him.
I know the people to be discontented:
They have cause, since Sapienza's adverse day,
When Genoa conquered: they have further cause,
Since they are nothing in the state, and in
The city worse than nothing — mere machines,
To serve the nobles' most patrician pleasure.
The troops have long arrears of pay, oft promised,
And murmur deeply — any hope of change
Will draw them forward: they shall pay themselves

With plunder: — but the priests — I doubt the priesthood
Will not be with us; they have hated me
Since that rash hour, when, maddened with the drone,
I smote the tardy bishop at Treviso,[57]
Quickening his holy march; yet, ne'ertheless,
They may be won, at least their chief at Rome,
By some well-timed concessions; but, above
All things, I must be speedy: at my hour
Of twilight little light of life remains.
Could I free Venice, and avenge my wrongs,
I had lived too long, and willingly would sleep
Next moment with my sires; and, wanting this,
Better that sixty of my fourscore years
Had been already where — how soon, I care not —
The whole must be extinguished; — better that
They ne'er had been, than drag me on to be
The thing these arch-oppressors fain would make me.
Let me consider — of efficient troops
There are three thousand posted at ——

Enter Vincenzo *and* Israel Bertuccio.

Vin. May it please
Your highness, the same patron whom I spake of
Is here to crave your patience.

Doge. Leave the chamber,
Vincenzo. — [*Exit* Vincenzo.
Sir, you may advance — what would you?

I. Ber. Redress.
Doge. Of whom?
I. Ber. Of God and of the Doge.
Doge. Alas! my friend, you seek it of the twain
Of least respect and interest in Venice.
You must address the council.
I. Ber. 'Twere in vain;
For he who injured me is one of them.
Doge. There's blood upon thy face — how came it there?
I. Ber. 'Tis mine, and not the first I've shed for Venice,
But the first shed by a Venetian hand:
A noble smote me.
Doge. Doth he live?
I. Ber. Not long —
But for the hope I had and have, that you,
My prince, yourself a soldier, will redress
Him, whom the laws of discipline and Venice
Permit not to protect himself; — if not —
I say no more.
Doge. But something you would do —
Is it not so?
I. Ber. I am a man, my lord.
Doge. Why so is he who smote you.
I. Ber. He is called so;
Nay, more, a noble one — at least, in Venice:
But since he hath forgotten that I am one,
And treats me like a brute, the brute may turn —
'Tis said the worm will.

Doge. Say — his name and lineage?

I. Ber. Barbaro.

Doge. What was the cause? or the pretext?

I. Ber. I am the chief of the arsenal,[58] employed
At present in repairing certain galleys
But roughly used by the Genoese last year.
This morning comes the noble Barbaro
Full of reproof, because our artisans
Had left some frivolous order of his house,
To execute the state's decree; I dared
To justify the men — he raised his hand; —
Behold my blood! the first time it e'er flowed
Dishonourably.

Doge. Have you long time served?

I. Ber. So long as to remember Zara's siege,
And fight beneath the chief who beat the Huns there,
Sometime my general, now the Doge Faliero. —

Doge. How! are we comrades? — the state's ducal robes
Sit newly on me, and you were appointed
Chief of the arsenal ere I came from Rome;
So that I recognised you not. Who placed you?

I. Ber. The late Doge; keeping still my old command
As patron of a galley: my new office
Was given as the reward of certain scars
(So was your predecessor pleased to say):
I little thought his bounty would conduct me
To his successor as a helpless plaintiff;
At least, in such a cause.

Doge. Are you much hurt?
I. Ber. Irreparably in my self-esteem.
Doge. Speak out; fear nothing: being stung at heart,
What would you do to be revenged on this man?
I. Ber. That which I dare not name, and yet will do.
Doge. Then wherefore came you here?
I. Ber. I come for justice,
Because my general is Doge, and will not
See his old soldier trampled on. Had any,
Save Faliero, filled the ducal throne,
This blood had been washed out in other blood.
Doge. You come to me for justice — unto *me!*
The Doge of Venice, and I cannot give it;
I cannot even obtain it — 'twas denied
To me most solemnly an hour ago!
I. Ber. How says your highness?
Doge. Steno is condemned
To a month's confinement.
I. Ber. What! the same who dared
To stain the ducal throne with those foul words,
That have cried shame to every ear in Venice?
Doge. Ay, doubtless they have echoed o'er the arsenal,
Keeping due time with every hammer's clink
As a good jest to jolly artisans;
Or making chorus to the creaking oar,
In the vile tune of every galley-slave,

Who, as he sung the merry stave, exulted
He was not a shamed dotard like the Doge.

I. Ber. Is't possible? a month's imprisonment!
No more for Steno?

Doge. You have heard the offence,
And now you know his punishment; and then
You ask redress of *me!* Go to the Forty,
Who passed the sentence upon Michel Steno;
They'll do as much by Barbaro, no doubt.

I. Ber. Ah! dared I speak my feelings!

Doge. Give them breath.
Mine have no further outrage to endure.

I. Ber. Then, in a word, it rests but on your word
To punish and avenge — I will not say
My petty wrong, for what is a mere blow,
However vile, to such a thing as I am? —
But the base insult done your state and person.

Doge. You overrate my power, which is a pageant.
This cap is not the monarch's crown; these robes
Might move compassion, like a beggar's rags;
Nay, more, a beggar's are his own, and these
But lent to the poor puppet, who must play
Its part with all its empire in this ermine.

I. Ber. Wouldst thou be king?

Doge. Yes — of a happy people.

I. Ber. Wouldst thou be sovereign lord of Venice?[59]

Doge. Ay,
If that the people shared that sovereignty,
So that nor they nor I were further slaves
To this o'ergrown aristocratic Hydra,
The poisonous heads of whose envenomed body
Have breathed a pestilence upon us all.

I. Ber. Yet, thou wast born, and still hast lived, patrician.

Doge. In evil hour was I so born; my birth
Hath made me Doge to be insulted: but
I lived and toiled a soldier and a servant
Of Venice and her people, not the senate;
Their good and my own honour were my guerdon.
I have fought and bled; commanded, ay, and conquered;
Have made and marred peace oft in embassies,
As it might chance to be our country's 'vantage;
Have traversed land and sea in constant duty,
Through almost sixty years, and still for Venice,
My father's and my birthplace, whose dear spires,
Rising at distance o'er the blue Lagoon,
It was reward enough for me to view
Once more; but not for any knot of men,
Nor sect, nor faction, did I bleed or sweat!
But would you know why I have done all this?
Ask of the bleeding pelican why she
Hath ripped her bosom? Had the bird a voice,
She'd tell thee 'twas for *all* her little ones.

I. Ber. And yet they made thee duke.

Doge. *They made* me so;
I sought it not, the flattering fetters met me
Returning from my Roman embassy,
And never having hitherto refused
Toil, charge, or duty for the state, I did not,
At these late years, decline what was the highest
Of all in seeming, but of all most base
In what we have to do and to endure:
Bear witness for me thou, my injured subject,
When I can neither right myself nor thee.

I. Ber. You shall do both, if you possess the will;
And many thousands more not less oppressed,
Who wait but for a signal — will you give it?

Doge. You speak in riddles.

I. Ber. Which shall soon be read
At peril of my life; if you disdain not
To lend a patient ear.

Doge. Say on.

I. Ber. Not thou,
Nor I alone, are injured and abused,
Contemned and trampled on; but the whole people
Groan with the strong conception of their wrongs:
The foreign soldiers in the senate's pay
Are discontented for their long arrears;
The native mariners, and civic troops,
Feel with their friends; for who is he amongst them
Whose brethren, parents, children, wives, or sisters,
Have not partook oppression, or pollution,
From the patricians? And the hopeless war

Against the Genoese, which is still maintained
With the plebeian blood, and treasure wrung
From their hard earnings, has inflamed them further:
Even now — but, I forget that speaking thus,
Perhaps I pass the sentence of my death!

Doge. And suffering what thou hast done — fear'st thou death?
Be silent then, and live on, to be beaten
By those for whom thou hast bled.

I. Ber. No, I will speak
At every hazard; and if Venice' Doge
Should turn delator, be the shame on him,
And sorrow too; for he will lose far more
Than I.

Doge. From me fear nothing; out with it!

I. Ber. Know then, that there are met and sworn in secret
A band of brethren, valiant hearts and true;
Men who have proved all fortunes, and have long
Grieved over that of Venice, and have right
To do so; having served her in all climes,
And having rescued her from foreign foes,
Would do the same from those within her walls.
They are not numerous, nor yet too few
For their great purpose; they have arms, and means,
And hearts, and hopes, and faith, and patient courage.

Doge. For what then do they pause?

I. Ber. An hour to strike.

Doge. (*aside*) Saint Mark's shall strike that hour![60]

I. Ber. I now have placed
My life, my honour, all my earthly hopes
Within thy power, but in the firm belief
That injuries like ours, sprung from one cause,
Will generate one vengeance: should it be so,
Be our chief now — our sovereign hereafter.

Doge. How many are ye?

I. Ber. I'll not answer that
Till I am answered.

Doge. How, sir! do you menace?

I. Ber. No; I affirm. I have betrayed myself;
But there's no torture in the mystic wells
Which undermine your palace, nor in those
Not less appalling cells, the "leaden roofs,"
To force a single name from me of others.
The Pozzi[61] and the Piombi were in vain;
They might wring blood from me, but treachery never.
And I would pass the fearful "Bridge of Sighs,"[62]
Joyous that mine must be the last that e'er
Would echo o'er the Stygian wave which flows
Between the murderers and the murdered, washing
The prison and the palace walls: there are
Those who would live to think on't, and avenge me.

Doge. If such your power and purpose, why come here
To sue for justice, being in the course
To do yourself due right?

I. Ber. Because the man,
Who claims protection from authority,
Showing his confidence and his submission
To that authority, can hardly be
Suspected of combining to destroy it.
Had I sate down too humbly with this blow,
A moody brow and muttered threats had made me
A marked man to the Forty's inquisition;
But loud complaint, however angrily
It shapes its phrase, is little to be feared,
And less distrusted. But, besides all this,
I had another reason.

Doge. What was that?

I. Ber. Some rumours that the Doge was greatly moved
By the reference of the Avogadori
Of Michel Steno's sentence to the Forty
Had reached me. I had served you, honoured you,
And felt that you were dangerously insulted,
Being of an order of such spirits, as
Requite tenfold both good and evil: 'twas
My wish to prove and urge you to redress.
Now you know all; and that I speak the truth,
My peril be the proof.

Doge. You have deeply ventured;
But all must do so who would greatly win:
Thus far I'll answer you — your secret's safe.

I. Ber. And is this all?

Doge. Unless with all intrusted,
What would you have me answer?

I. Ber. I would have you
Trust him who leaves his life in trust with you.

Doge. But I must know your plan, your names, and numbers;
The last may then be doubled, and the former
Matured and strengthened.

I. Ber. We're enough already;
You are the sole ally we covet now.

Doge. But bring me to the knowledge of your chiefs.

I. Ber. That shall be done upon your formal pledge
To keep the faith that we will pledge to you.

Doge. When? where?

I. Ber. This night I'll bring to your apartment
Two of the principals; a greater number
Were hazardous.

Doge. Stay, I must think of this.
What if I were to trust myself amongst you,
And leave the palace?

I. Ber. You must come alone.

Doge. With but my nephew.

I. Ber. Not were he your son.

Doge. Wretch! darest thou name my son? He died in arms
At Sapienza for this faithless state.
Oh! that he were alive, and I in ashes!
Or that he were alive ere I be ashes!
I should not need the dubious aid of strangers.

I. Ber. Not one of all those strangers whom thou doubtest,
But will regard thee with a filial feeling,
So that thou keep'st a father's faith with them.

Doge. The die is cast. Where is the place of meeting?

I. Ber. At midnight I will be alone and masked
Where'er your highness pleases to direct me,
To wait your coming, and conduct you where
You shall receive our homage, and pronounce
Upon our project.

Doge. At what hour arises
The moon?

I. Ber. Late, but the atmosphere is thick and dusky,
'Tis a sirocco.

Doge. At the midnight hour, then,
Near to the church where sleep my sires;[63] the same,
Twin-named from the apostles John and Paul;
A gondola,[64] with one oar only, will
Lurk in the narrow channel which glides by.
Be there.

I. Ber. I will not fail.

Doge. And now retire ——

I. Ber. In the full hope your highness will not falter
In your great purpose. Prince, I take my leave.

[*Exit* Israel Bertuccio.

Doge. (*solus*) At midnight, by the church Saints
John and Paul,
Where sleep my noble fathers, I repair —
To what? to hold a council in the dark
With common ruffians leagued to ruin states!
And will not my great sires leap from the vault,
Where lie two doges who preceded me,
And pluck me down amongst them? Would they
could!
For I should rest in honour with the honoured.
Alas! I must not think of them, but those
Who have made me thus unworthy of a name
Noble and brave as aught of consular
On Roman marbles; but I will redeem it
Back to its antique lustre in our annals,
By sweet revenge on all that's base in Venice,
And freedom to the rest, or leave it black
To all the growing calumnies of time,
Which never spare the fame of him who fails,
But try the Cæsar, or the Catiline,
By the true touchstone of desert — success.[65]

ACT II.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in the Ducal Palace.

ANGIOLINA (*wife of the* DOGE) *and* MARIANNA.

Ang. What was the Doge's answer?
Mar. That he was
That moment summoned to a conference;
But 'tis by this time ended. I perceived
Not long ago the senators embarking;
And the last gondola may now be seen
Gliding into the throng of barks which stud
The glittering waters.
Ang. Would he were returned!
He has been much disquieted of late;
And Time, which has not tamed his fiery spirit
Nor yet enfeebled even his mortal frame,
Which seems to be more nourished by a soul
So quick and restless that it would consume
Less hardy clay — Time has but little power
On his resentments or his griefs. Unlike
To other spirits of his order, who,
In the first burst of passion, pour away
Their wrath or sorrow, all things wear in him
An aspect of eternity: his thoughts,
His feelings, passions, good or evil, all
Have nothing of old age; and his bold brow

Bears but the scars of mind, the thoughts of years,
Not their decrepitude: and he of late
Has been more agitated than his wont.
Would he were come! for I alone have power
Upon his troubled spirit.

Mar. It is true,
His highness has of late been greatly moved,
By the affront of Steno, and with cause:
But the offender doubtless even now
Is doomed to expiate his rash insult with
Such chastisement as will enforce respect
To female virtue, and to noble blood.

Ang. 'Twas a gross insult; but I heed it not
For the rash scorner's falsehood in itself,
But for the effect, the deadly deep impression
Which it has made upon Faliero's soul,
The proud, the fiery, the austere — austere
To all save me: I tremble when I think
To what it may conduct.

Mar. Assuredly
The Doge cannot suspect you?

Ang. Suspect *me!*
Why Steno dared not: when he scrawled his lie,
Grovelling by stealth in the moon's glimmering light,
His own still conscience smote him for the act,
And every shadow on the walls frowned shame
Upon his coward calumny.

Mar. 'Twere fit
He should be punished grievously.

Ang. He is so.

Mar. What! is the sentence passed? is he condemned?[66]

Ang. I know not that, but he has been detected.

Mar. And deem you this enough for such foul scorn?

Ang. I would not be a judge in my own cause,
Nor do I know what sense of punishment
May reach the soul of ribalds such as Steno;
But if his insults sink no deeper in
The minds of the inquisitors than they
Have ruffled mine, he will, for all acquittance,
Be left to his own shamelessness or shame.

Mar. Some sacrifice is due to slandered virtue.

Ang. Why, what is virtue if it needs a victim?
Or if it must depend upon men's words?
The dying Roman said, "'twas but a name:"
It were indeed no more, if human breath
Could make or mar it.

Mar. Yet full many a dame,
Stainless and faithful, would feel all the wrong
Of such a slander; and less rigid ladies,
Such as abound in Venice, would be loud
And all-inexorable in their cry
For justice.

Ang. This but proves it is the name
And not the quality they prize: the first
Have found it a hard task to hold their honour,
If they require it to be blazoned forth;
And those who have not kept it, seek its seeming

As they would look out for an ornament
Of which they feel the want, but not because
They think it so ; they live in others' thoughts,
And would seem honest as they must seem fair.

Mar. You have strange thoughts for a patrician dame.

Ang. And yet they were my father's ; with his name,
The sole inheritance he left.

Mar. You want none ;
Wife to a prince, the chief of the Republic.

Ang. I should have sought none though a peasant's bride,
But feel not less the love and gratitude
Due to my father, who bestowed my hand
Upon his early, tried, and trusted friend,
The Count Val di Marino, now our Doge.

Mar. And with that hand did he bestow your heart ?

Ang. He did so, or it had not been bestowed.

Mar. Yet this strange disproportion in your years,
And, let me add, disparity of tempers,
Might make the world doubt whether such an union
Could make you wisely, permanently happy.

Ang. The world will think with worldlings ; but my heart
Has still been in my duties, which are many ;
But never difficult.

Mar. And do you love him?
Ang. I love all noble qualities which merit
Love, and I loved my father, who first taught me
To single out what we should love in others,
And to subdue all tendency to lend
The best and purest feelings of our nature
To baser passions. He bestowed my hand
Upon Faliero: he had known him noble,
Brave, generous; rich in all the qualities
Of soldier, citizen, and friend; in all
Such have I found him as my father said.
His faults are those that dwell in the high bosoms
Of men who have commanded; too much pride,
And the deep passions fiercely fostered by
The uses of patricians, and a life
Spent in the storms of state and war; and also
From the quick sense of honour, which becomes
A duty to a certain sign, a vice
When overstrained, and this I fear in him.
And then he has been rash from his youth upwards,
Yet tempered by redeeming nobleness
In such sort, that the wariest of republics
Has lavished all its chief employs upon him.
From his first fight to his last embassy,
From which on his return the dukedom met him.
Mar. But previous to this marriage, had your heart
Ne'er beat for any of the noble youth,
Such as in years had been more meet to match
Beauty like yours? or since have you ne'er seen

One, who, if your fair hand were still to give,
Might now pretend to Loredano's daughter?

Ang. I answered your first question when I said I married.

Mar. And the second?

Ang. Needs no answer.

Mar. I pray you pardon, if I have offended.

Ang. I feel no wrath, but some surprise: I knew not
That wedded bosoms could permit themselves
To ponder upon what they *now* might choose,
Or aught save their past choice.

Mar. 'Tis their past choice
That far too often makes them deem they would
Now choose more wisely, could they cancel it.

Ang. It may be so. I knew not of such thoughts.

Mar. Here comes the Doge — shall I retire?

Ang. It may
Be better you should quit me; he seems rapt
In thought. — How pensively he takes his way!

[*Exit* Marianna.

Enter the Doge *and* Pietro.

Doge. (*musing*) There is a certain Philip Calendaro
Now in the Arsenal, who holds command
Of eighty men, and has great influence
Besides on all the spirits of his comrades:
This man, I hear, is bold and popular,
Sudden and daring, and yet secret; 'twould

Be well that he were won: I needs must hope
That Israel Bertuccio has secured him,
But fain would be ——
Pie. My lord, pray pardon me
For breaking in upon your meditation;
The Senator Bertuccio, your kinsman,
Charged me to follow and enquire your pleasure
To fix an hour when he may speak with you.
Doge. At sunset. — Stay a moment — let me see —
Say in the second hour of night. [*Exit* PIETRO.
Ang. My lord!
Doge. My dearest child, forgive me — why delay
So long approaching me? — I saw you not.
Ang. You were absorbed in thought, and he who now
Has parted from you might have words of weight
To bear you from the senate.
Doge. From the senate? [67]
Ang. I would not interrupt him in his duty
And theirs.
Doge. The senate's duty! you mistake;
'Tis we who owe all service to the senate.
Ang. I thought the Duke had held command in Venice.
Doge. He shall. — But let that pass. — We will be jocund.
How fares it with you? have you been abroad?
The day is overcast, but the calm wave
Favours the gondolier's light skimming oar;

Or have you held a levee of your friends?
Or has your music made you solitary?
Say — is there aught that you would will within
The little sway now left the Duke? or aught
Of fitting splendour, or of honest pleasure,
Social or lonely, that would glad your heart,
To compensate for many a dull hour, wasted
On an old man oft moved with many cares?
Speak, and 'tis done.

Ang. You're ever kind to me.
I have nothing to desire, or to request,
Except to see you oftener and calmer.

Doge. Calmer?

Ang. Ay, calmer, my good lord. — Ah, why
Do you still keep apart, and walk alone,
And let such strong emotions stamp your brow,
As not betraying their full import, yet
Disclose too much?

Doge. Disclose too much! — of what?
What is there to disclose?

Ang. A heart so ill
At ease.

Doge. 'Tis nothing, child. — But in the state
You know what daily cares oppress all those
Who govern this precarious commonwealth;
Now suffering from the Genoese without,
And malcontents within — 'tis this which makes me
More pensive and less tranquil than my wont.

Ang. Yet this existed long before, and never
Till in these late days did I see you thus.

Forgive me; there is something at your heart
More than the mere discharge of public duties,
Which long use and a talent like to yours
Have rendered light, nay, a necessity,
To keep your mind from stagnating. 'Tis not
In hostile states, nor perils, thus to shake you;
You, who have stood all storms and never sunk,
And climbed up to the pinnacle of power
And never fainted by the way, and stand
Upon it, and can look down steadily
Along the depth beneath, and ne'er feel dizzy.
Were Genoa's galleys riding in the port,
Were civil fury raging in Saint Mark's,
You are not to be wrought on, but would fall,
As you have risen, with an unaltered brow —
Your feelings now are of a different kind;
Something has stung your pride, not patriotism.

Doge. Pride! Angiolina? Alas! none is left me.

Ang. Yes — the same sin that overthrew the angels,
And of all sins most easily besets
Mortals the nearest to the angelic nature:
The vile are only vain; the great are proud.

Doge. I *had* the pride of honour, of *your* honour,
Deep at my heart —— But let us change the theme.

Ang. Ah no! — As I have ever shared your kindness
In all things else, let me not be shut out
From your distress: were it of public import,

You know I never sought, would never seek
To win a word from you; but feeling now
Your grief is private, it belongs to me
To lighten or divide it. Since the day
When foolish Steno's ribaldry detected
Unfixed your quiet, you are greatly changed,
And I would soothe you back to what you were.

Doge. To what I was! — Have you heard Steno's sentence?

Ang. No.

Doge. A month's arrest.

Ang. Is it not enough?

Doge. Enough! — yes, for a drunken galley slave,
Who, stung by stripes, may murmur at his master;
But not for a deliberate, false, cool villain,
Who stains a lady's and a prince's honour
Even on the throne of his authority.

Ang. There seems to me enough in the conviction
Of a patrician guilty of a falsehood:
All other punishment were light unto
His loss of honour.

Doge. Such men have no honour;
They have but their vile lives — and these are spared.

Ang. You would not have him die for this offence?

Doge. Not *now*: — being still alive, I'd have him live
Long as *he* can; he has ceased to merit death;

The guilty saved hath damned his hundred judges,
And he is pure, for now his crime is theirs.
Ang. Oh! had this false and flippant libeller
Shed his young blood for his absurd lampoon,
Ne'er from that moment could this breast have known
A joyous hour, or dreamless slumber more.
Doge. Does not the law of Heaven say blood for blood?
And he who *taints* kills more than he who sheds it.
Is it the *pain* of blows, or *shame* of blows,
That make such deadly to the sense of man?
Do not the laws of man say blood for honour?
And, less than honour, for a little gold?
Say not the laws of nations blood for treason?
Is't nothing to have filled these veins with poison
For their once healthful current? is it nothing
To have stained your name and mine — the noblest names?
Is't nothing to have brought into contempt
A prince before his people? to have failed
In the respect accorded by mankind
To youth in woman, and old age in man?
To virtue in your sex, and dignity
In ours? — But let them look to it who have saved him.[68]
Ang. Heaven bids us to forgive our enemies.
Doge. Doth Heaven forgive her own? Is Satan saved
From wrath eternal?[69]

Ang. Do not speak thus wildly —
Heaven will alike forgive you and your foes.
Doge. Amen! May Heaven forgive them!
Ang. And will you?
Doge. Yes, when they are in heaven!
Ang. And not till then?
Doge. What matters my forgiveness? an old man's,
Worn out, scorned, spurned, abused; what matters then
My pardon more than my resentment, both
Being weak and worthless? I have lived too long. —
But let us change the argument. — My child!
My injured wife, the child of Loredano,
The brave, the chivalrous, how little deemed
Thy father, wedding thee unto his friend,
That he was linking thee to shame! — Alas!
Shame without sin, for thou art faultless. Hadst thou
But had a different husband, *any* husband
In Venice save the Doge, this blight, this brand,
This blasphemy had never fallen upon thee.
So young, so beautiful, so good, so pure,
To suffer this, and yet be unavenged!
Ang. I am too well avenged, for you still love me,
And trust, and honour me; and all men know
That you are just, and I am true: what more
Could I require, or you command?

Doge. 'Tis well,
And may be better; but what'er betide,
Be thou at least kind to my memory.
Ang. Why speak you thus?
Doge. It is no matter why;
But I would still, whatever others think,
Have your respect both now and in my grave.
Ang. Why should you doubt it? has it ever failed?
Doge. Come hither, child; I would a word with you.
Your father was my friend; unequal fortune
Made him my debtor for some courtesies
Which bind the good more firmly: when, oppressed
With his last malady, he willed our union,
It was not to repay me, long repaid
Before by his great loyalty in friendship;
His object was to place your orphan beauty
In honourable safety from the perils,
Which, in this scorpion nest of vice, assail
A lonely and undowered maid. I did not
Think with him, but would not oppose the thought
Which soothed his death-bed.
Ang. I have not forgotten
The nobleness with which you bade me speak
If my young heart held any preference
Which would have made me hapiper; nor your offer
To make my dowry equal to the rank
Of aught in Venice, and forego all claim
My father's last injunction gave you.

Doge. Thus,
'Twas not a foolish dotard's vile caprice,
Nor the false edge of aged appetite,
Which made me covetous of girlish beauty,
And a young bride: for in my fieriest youth
I swayed such passions; nor was this my age
Infected with that leprosy of lust
Which taints the hoariest years of vicious men,
Making them ransack to the very last
The dregs of pleasure for their vanished joys;
Or buy in selfish marriage some young victim,
Too helpless to refuse a state that's honest,
Too feeling not to know herself a wretch.
Our wedlock was not of this sort; you had
Freedom from me to choose, and urged in answer
Your father's choice.

Ang. I did so; I would do so
In face of earth and heaven; for I have never
Repented for my sake; sometimes for yours,
In pondering o'er your late disquietudes.[70]

Doge. I knew my heart would never treat you harshly;
I knew my days could not disturb you long;
And then the daughter of my earliest friend,
His worthy daughter, free to choose again,
Wealthier and wiser, in the ripest bloom
Of womanhood, more skilful to select
By passing these probationary years
Inheriting a prince's name and riches,
Secured, by the short penance of enduring

An old man for some summers, against all
That law's chicane or envious kinsmen might
Have urged against her right; my best friend's child
Would choose more fitly in respect of years,
And not less truly in a faithful heart.
Ang. My lord, I looked but to my father's wishes,
Hallowed by his last words, and to my heart
For doing all its duties, and replying
With faith to him with whom I was affianced.
Ambitious hopes ne'er crossed my dreams; and should
The hour you speak of come, it will be seen so.
Doge. I do believe you; and I know you true:
For love, romantic love, which in my youth
I knew to be illusion, and ne'er saw
Lasting, but often fatal, it had been
No lure for me, in my most passionate days,
And could not be so now, did such exist.
But such respect, and mildly paid regard
As a true feeling for your welfare, and
A free compliance with all honest wishes;
A kindness to your virtues, watchfulness
Not shown, but shadowing o'er such little failings
As youth is apt in, so as not to check
Rashly, but win you from them ere you knew
You had been won, but thought the change your choice;
A pride not in your beauty, but your conduct, —

A trust in you — a patriarchal love,
And not a doting homage — friendship, faith —
Such estimation in your eyes as these
Might claim, I hoped for.

Ang. And have ever had.

Doge. I think so. For the difference in our years
You knew it, choosing me, and chose: I trusted
Not to my qualities, nor would have faith
In such, nor outward ornaments of nature,
Were I still in my five and twentieth spring;
I trusted to the blood of Loredano
Pure in your veins; I trusted to the soul
God gave you — to the truths your father taught you —
To your belief in heaven — to your mild virtues —
To your own faith and honour, for my own.

Ang. You have done well.—I thank you for that trust,
Which I have never for one moment ceased
To honour you the more for.

Doge. Where is honour,
Innate and precept-strengthened, 'tis the rock
Of faith connubial: where it is not — where
Light thoughts are lurking, or the vanities
Of worldly pleasure rankle in the heart,
Or sensual throbs convulse it, well I know
'Twere hopeless for humanity to dream
Of honesty in such infected blood,
Although 'twere wed to him it covets most:

An incarnation of the poet's god
In all his marble-chiselled beauty, or
The demi-deity, Alcides, in
His majesty of superhuman manhood,
Would not suffice to bind where virtue is not;
It is consistency which forms and proves it:
Vice cannot fix, and virtue cannot change.
The once fallen woman must for ever fall;
For vice must have variety, while virtue
Stands like the sun, and all which rolls around
Drinks life, and light, and glory from her aspect.[71]

Ang. And seeing, feeling thus this truth in others,
(I pray you pardon me;) but wherefore yield you
To the most fierce of fatal passions, and
Disquiet your great thoughts with restless hate
Of such a thing as Steno?

Doge. You mistake me.
It is not Steno who could move me thus;
Had it been so, he should —— but let that pass.

Ang. What is't you feel so deeply, then, even now?

Doge. The violated majesty of Venice,
At once insulted in her lord and laws.

Ang. Alas! why will you thus consider it?

Doge. I have thought on't till —— but let me lead you back
To what I urged; all these things being noted,
I wedded you; the world then did me justice
Upon the motive, and my conduct proved

They did me right, while yours was all to praise:
You had all freedom — all respect — all trust
From me and mine; and, born of those who made
Princes at home, and swept kings from their thrones
On foreign shores, in all things you appeared
Worthy to be our first of native dames.

Ang. To what does this conduct?

Doge. To thus much — that
A miscreant's angry breath may blast it all —
A villain, whom for his unbridled bearing,
Even in the midst of our great festival,
I caused to be conducted forth, and taught
How to demean himself in ducal chambers;
A wretch like this may leave upon the wall
The blighting venom of his sweltering heart,
And this shall spread itself in general poison;
And woman's innocence, man's honour, pass
Into a by-word; and the doubly felon
(Who first insulted virgin modesty
By a gross affront to your attendant damsels
Amidst the noblest of our dames in public)
Requite himself for his most just expulsion
By blackening publicly his sovereign's consort,
And be absolved by his upright compeers.

Ang. But he has been condemned into captivity.

Doge. For such as him a dungeon were acquittal;
And his brief term of mock-arrest will pass

Within a palace. But I've done with him;
The rest must be with you.
Ang. With me, my lord?
Doge. Yes, Angiolina. Do not marvel; I
Have let this prey upon me till I feel
My life cannot be long; and fain would have you
Regard the injunctions you will find within
This scroll (*Giving her a paper*) —— Fear not;
they are for your advantage:
Read them hereafter at the fitting hour.
Ang. My lord, in life, and after life, you shall
Be honoured still by me: but may your days
Be many yet — and happier than the present!
This passion will give way, and you will be
Serene, and what you should be — what you were.
Doge. I will be what I should be, or be nothing;
But never more — oh! never, never more,
O'er the few days or hours which yet await
The blighted old age of Faliero, shall
Sweet Quiet shed her sunset! Never more
Those summer shadows rising from the past
Of a not ill-spent nor inglorious life,
Mellowing the last hours as the night approaches,
Shall soothe me to my moment of long rest.
I had but little more to ask, or hope,
Save the regards due to the blood and sweat,
And the soul's labour through which I had toiled
To make my country honoured. As her servant —
Her servant, though her chief — I would have gone

Down to my fathers with a name serene
And pure as theirs; but this has been denied me. —
Would I had died at Zara!
Ang. There you saved
The state; then live to save her still. A day,
Another day like that would be the best
Reproof to them, and sole revenge for you.
Doge. But one such day occurs within an age;
My life is little less than one, and 'tis
Enough for Fortune to have granted *once*,
That which scarce one more favoured citizen
May win in many states and years. But why
Thus speak I? Venice has forgot that day —
Then why should I remember it? — Farewell,
Sweet Angiolina! I must to my cabinet;
There's much for me to do — and the hour hastens.
Ang. Remember what you were.
Doge. It were in vain!
Joy's recollection is no longer joy,
While Sorrow's memory is a sorrow still.
Ang. At least, whate'er may urge, let me implore
That you will take some little pause of rest:
Your sleep for many nights has been so turbid,
That it had been relief to have awaked you,
Had I not hoped that Nature would o'erpower
At length the thoughts which shook your slumbers thus.
An hour of rest will give you to your toils
With fitter thoughts and freshened strength.

Doge. I cannot —
I must not, if I could; for never was
Such reason to be watchful: yet a few —
Yet a few days and dream-perturbed nights,
And I shall slumber well — but where? — no matter.
Adieu, my Angiolina.
Ang. Let me be
An instant — yet an instant your companion!
I cannot bear to leave you thus.
Doge. Come then,
My gentle child — forgive me; thou wert made
For better fortunes than to share in mine,
Now darkling in their close toward the deep vale
Where Death sits robed in his all-sweeping shadow.[72]
When I am gone — it may be sooner than
Even these years warrant, for there is that stirring
Within — above — around, that in this city
Will make the cemeteries populous
As e'er they were by pestilence or war, —
When I *am* nothing, let that which I *was*
Be still sometimes a name on thy sweet lips,
A shadow in thy fancy, of a thing
Which would not have thee mourn it, but remember; —
Let us begone, my child — the time is pressing.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A retired Spot near the Arsenal.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO *and* PHILIP CALENDARO.

Cal. How sped you, Israel, in your late complaint?

I. Ber. Why, well.

Cal. Is't possible! will he be punished?

I. Ber. Yes.

Cal. With what? a mulct or an arrest?

I. Ber. With death!—

Cal. Now you rave, or must intend revenge,
Such as I counselled you, with your own hand.

I. Ber. Yes; and for one sole draught of hate, forego
The great redress we meditate for Venice,
And change a life of hope for one of exile;
Leaving one scorpion crushed, and thousands stinging
My friends, my family, my countrymen!
No, Calendaro; these same drops of blood,
Shed shamefully, shall have the whole of his
For their requital —— But not only his;
We will not strike for private wrongs alone:
Such are for selfish passions and rash men,
But are unworthy a tyrannicide.

Cal. You have more patience than I care to boast.

Had I been present when you bore this insult,
I must have slain him, or expired myself
In the vain effort to repress my wrath.
I. Ber. Thank Heaven, you were not — all had else been marred:
As 'tis, our cause looks prosperous still.
Cal. You saw
The Doge — what answer gave he?
I. Ber. That there was
No punishment for such as Barbaro.
Cal. I told you so before, and that 'twas idle
To think of justice from such hands.
I. Ber. At least,
It lulled suspicion, showing confidence.
Had I been silent, not a sbirro but
Had kept me in his eye, as meditating
A silent, solitary, deep revenge.
Cal. But wherefore not address you to the Council?
The Doge is a mere puppet, who can scarce
Obtain right for himself. Why speak to him?
I. Ber. You shall know that hereafter.
Cal. Why not now?
I. Ber. Be patient but till midnight. Get your musters,
And bid our friends prepare their companies: —
Set all in readiness to strike the blow,
Perhaps in a few hours; we have long waited
For a fit time — that hour is on the dial,
It may be, of to-morrow's sun: delay

Beyond may breed us double danger. See
That all be punctual at our place of meeting,
And armed, excepting those of the Sixteen,
Who will remain among the troops to wait
The signal.

Cal. These brave words have breathed new life
Into my veins; I am sick of these protracted
And hesitating councils: day on day
Crawled on, and added but another link
To our long fetters, and some fresher wrong
Inflicted on our brethren or ourselves,
Helping to swell our tyrants' bloated strength.
Let us but deal upon them, and I care not
For the result, which must be death or freedom!
I'm weary to the heart of finding neither.

I. Ber. We will be free in life or death! the grave
Is chainless. Have you all the musters ready?
And are the sixteen companies completed
To sixty?

Cal. All save two, in which there are
Twenty-five wanting to make up the number.

I. Ber. No matter; we can do without. Whose are they?

Cal. Bertram's and old Soranzo's, both of whom
Appear less forward in the cause than we are.

I. Ber. Your fiery nature makes you deem all those
Who are not restless cold: but there exists

Oft in concentred spirits not less daring
Than in more loud avengers. Do not doubt them.

Cal. I do not doubt the elder; but in Bertram
There is a hesitating softness, fatal
To enterprise like ours: I've seen that man
Weep like an infant o'er the misery
Of others, heedless of his own, though greater;
And in a recent quarrel I beheld him
Turn sick at sight of blood, although a villain's.

I. Ber. The truly brave are soft of heart and eyes,
And feel for what their duty bids them do.
I have known Bertram long; there doth not breathe
A soul more full of honour.

Cal. It may be so:
I apprehend less treachery than weakness;
Yet as he has no mistress, and no wife
To work upon his milkiness of spirit,
He may go through the ordeal; it is well
He is an orphan, friendless save in us:
A woman or a child had made him less
Than either in resolve.

I. Ber. Such ties are not
For those who are called to the high destinies
Which purify corrupted commonwealths;
We must forget all feelings save the *one* —
We must resign all passions save our purpose —
We must behold no object save our country —
And only look on death as beautiful,

So that the sacrifice ascend to heaven,
And draw down freedom on her evermore.

Cal. But if we fail ——

I. Ber. They never fail who die
In a great cause: the block may soak their gore;[73]
Their heads may sodden in the sun; their limbs
Be strung to city gates and castle walls —
But still their spirit walks abroad. Though years
Elapse, and others share as dark a doom,
They but augment the deep and sweeping thoughts
Which overpower all others, and conduct
The world at last to freedom: What were we,
If Brutus had not lived? He died in giving[74]
Rome liberty, but left a deathless lesson —
A name which is a virtue, and a soul
Which multiplies itself throughout all time
When wicked men wax mighty, and a state
Turns servile: he and his high friend were styled
"The last of Romans!" Let us be the first
Of true Venetians, sprung from Roman sires.

Cal. Our fathers did not fly from Attila
Into these isles, where palaces have sprung
On banks redeemed from the rude ocean's ooze,
To own a thousand despots in his place.
Better bow down before the Hun, and call
A Tartar lord, than these swoln silkworms masters!
The first at least was man, and used his sword
As sceptre: these unmanly creeping things
Command our swords, and rule us with a word
As with a spell.

I. Ber. It shall be broken soon.
You say that all things are in readiness:
To-day I have not been the usual round,
And why thou knowest; but thy vigilance
Will better have supplied my care: these orders
In recent council to redouble now
Our efforts to repair the galleys, have
Lent a fair colour to the introduction
Of many of our cause into the arsenal,
As new artificers for their equipment,
Or fresh recruits obtained in haste to man
The hoped-for fleet. — Are all supplied with arms?

Cal. All who were deemed trustworthy: there are some
Whom it were well to keep in ignorance
Till it be time to strike, and then supply them;
When in the heat and hurry of the hour
They have no opportunity to pause,
But needs must on with those who will surround them.

I. Ber. You have said well. Have you remarked all such?

Cal. I've noted most; and caused the other chiefs
To use like caution in their companies.
As far as I have seen, we are enough
To make the enterprise secure, if 'tis
Commenced to-morrow; but, till 'tis begun,
Each hour is pregnant with a thousand perils.

I. Ber. Let the Sixteen meet at the wonted hour,

Except Soranzo, Nicoletto Blondo,
And Marco Giuda, who will keep their watch
Within the arsenal, and hold all ready
Expectant of the signal we will fix on.

Cal. We will not fail.

I. Ber. Let all the rest be there;
I have a stranger to present to them.

Cal. A stranger! doth he know the secret?

I. Ber. Yes.

Cal. And have you dared to peril your friends' lives
On a rash confidence in one we know not?

I. Ber. I have risked no man's life except my own —
Of that be certain: he is one who may
Make our assurance doubly sure, according
His aid; and if reluctant, he no less
Is in our power: he comes alone with me,
And cannot 'scape us; but he will not swerve.

Cal. I cannot judge of this until I know him:
Is he one of our order?

I. Ber. Ay, in spirit,
Although a child of greatness; he is one
Who would become a throne, or overthrow one —
One who has done great deeds, and seen great changes;
No tyrant, though bred up to tyranny;
Valiant in war, and sage in council; noble
In nature, although haughty; quick, yet wary:
Yet for all this, so full of certain passions,

That if once stirred and baffled, as he has been
Upon the tenderest points, there is no Fury
In Grecian story like to that which wrings
His vitals with her burning hands, till he
Grows capable of all things for revenge;
And add too, that his mind is liberal,
He sees and feels the people are oppressed,
And shares their sufferings. Take him all in all,
We have need of such, and such have need of us.

Cal. And what part would you have him take with us?

I. Ber. It may be, that of chief.

Cal. What! and resign
Your own command as leader?

I. Ber. Even so.
My object is to make your cause end well,
And not to push myself to power. Experience,
Some skill, and your own choice, had marked me out
To act in trust as your commander, till
Some worthier should appear: if I have found such
As you yourselves shall own more worthy, think you
That I would hesitate from selfishness,
And, covetous of brief authority,
Stake our deep interest on my single thoughts,
Rather than yield to one above me in
All leading qualities? No, Calendaro,
Know your friend better; but you all shall judge. —
Away! and let us meet at the fixed hour.
Be vigilant, and all will yet go well.

Cal. Worthy Bertuccio, I have known you ever
Trusty and brave, with head and heart to plan
What I have still been prompt to execute.
For my own part, I seek no other chief;
What the rest will decide I know not, but
I am with YOU, as I have ever been,
In all our undertakings. Now farewell,
Until the hour of midnight sees us meet. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Scene, the Space between the Canal and the Church of San Giovanni e San Paolo. An equestrian Statue before it. — A Gondola lies in the Canal at some distance.

Enter the DOGE *alone, disguised.*

Doge. (*solus*) I am before the hour, the hour whose voice,
Pealing into the arch of night, might strike
These palaces with ominous tottering,
And rock their marbles to the corner-stone,
Waking the sleepers from some hideous dream
Of indistinct but awful augury
Of that which will befall them. Yes, proud city!
Thou must be cleansed of the black blood which makes thee
A lazar-house of tyranny: the task

Is forced upon me, I have sought it not;
And therefore was I punished, seeing this
Patrician pestilence spread on and on,
Until at length it smote me in my slumbers,
And I am tainted, and must wash away
The plague-spots in the healing wave. Tall fane!
Where sleep my fathers, whose dim statues shadow
The floor which doth divide us from the dead,
Where all the pregnant hearts of our bold blood,
Mouldered into a mite of ashes, hold
In one shrunk heap what once made many heroes,
When what is now a handful shook the earth —
Fane of the tutelar saints who guard our house!
Vault where two Doges rest — my sires! who died
The one of toil, the other in the field,
With a long race of other lineal chiefs
And sages, whose great labours, wounds, and state
I have inherited, — let the graves gape,
Till all thine aisles be peopled with the dead,
And pour them from thy portals to gaze on me!
I call them up, and them and thee to witness
What it hath been which put me to this task —
Their pure high blood, their blazon-roll of glories,
Their mighty name dishonoured all *in* me,
Not *by* me, but by the ungrateful nobles
We fought to make our equals, not our lords: — [75]
And chiefly thou, Ordelafo the brave,
Who perished in the field, where I since conquered,

Battling at Zara, did the hecatombs
Of thine and Venice' foes, there offered up
By thy descendant, merit such acquittance?[76]
Spirits! smile down upon me; for my cause
Is yours, in all life now can be of yours, —
Your fame, your name, all mingled up in mine,
And in the future fortunes of our race!
Let me but prosper, and I make this city
Free and immortal, and our house's name
Worthier of what you were, now and hereafter![77]

Enter Israel Bertuccio.

I. Ber. Who goes there?
Doge. A friend to Venice.
I. Ber. 'Tis he.
Welcome, my lord, — you are before the time.
Doge. I am ready to proceed to your assembly.
I. Ber. Have with you. — I am proud and pleased to see
Such confident alacrity. Your doubts
Since our last meeting, then, are all dispelled?
Doge. Not so — but I have set my little left
Of life upon this cast: the die was thrown
When I first listened to your treason — Start not!
That is the word; I cannot shape my tongue
To syllable black deeds into smooth names,
Though I be wrought on to commit them. When
I heard you tempt your sovereign, and forbore
To have you dragged to prison, I became

Your guiltiest accomplice: now you may,
If it so please you, do as much by me.
I. Ber. Strange words, my lord, and most unmerited;
I am no spy, and neither are we traitors.
Doge. *We* — *We!* — no matter — you have earned the right
To talk of *us.* — But to the point. — If this
Attempt succeeds, and Venice, rendered free
And flourishing, when we are in our graves,
Conducts her generations to our tombs,
And makes her children with their little hands
Strew flowers o'er her deliverers' ashes, then
The consequence will sanctify the deed,
And we shall be like the two Bruti in
The annals of hereafter; but if not,
If we should fail, employing bloody means
And secret plot, although to a good end,
Still we are traitors, honest Israel; — thou
No less than he who was thy sovereign
Six hours ago, and now thy brother rebel.
I. Ber. 'Tis not the moment to consider thus,
Else I could answer. — Let us to the meeting,
Or we may be observed in lingering here.
Doge. We *are* observed, and have been.
I. Ber. We observed!
Let me discover — and this steel ——
Doge. Put up;
Here are no human witnesses: look there —
What see you?

I. Ber. Only a tall warrior's statue
Bestriding a proud steed, in the dim light
Of the dull moon.

Doge. That warrior was the sire
Of my sire's fathers, and that statue was
Decreed to him by the twice rescued city: —
Think you that he looks down on us or no?

I. Ber. My lord, these are mere fantasies; there are
No eyes in marble.

Doge. But there are in Death.
I tell thee, man, there is a spirit in
Such things that acts and sees, unseen, though felt;
And, if there be a spell to stir the dead,
'Tis in such deeds as we are now upon.
Deem'st thou the souls of such a race as mine
Can rest, when he, their last descendant chief,
Stands plotting on the brink of their pure graves
With stung plebeians?[78]

I. Ber. It had been as well
To have pondered this before, — e'er you embarked
In our great enterprise. — Do you repent?

Doge. No — but I *feel*, and shall do to the last.
I cannot quench a glorious life at once,
Nor dwindle to the thing I now must be,[79]
And take men's lives by stealth, without some pause:
Yet doubt me not; it is this very feeling,
And knowing *what* has wrung me to be thus,

Which is your best security. There's not
A roused mechanic in your busy plot[80]
So wronged as I, so fall'n, so loudly called
To his redress: the very means I am forced
By these fell tyrants to adopt is such,
That I abhor them doubly for the deeds
Which I must do to pay them back for theirs.

I. Ber. Let us away — hark — the hour strikes.

Doge. On — on —
It is our knell, or that of Venice — On.

I. Ber. Say rather, 'tis her freedom's rising peal
Of triumph —— This way — we are near the place.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The House where the Conspirators meet.

DAGOLINO, DORO, BERTRAM, FEDELE TREVISANO, CALENDARO, ANTONIO DELLE BENDE, etc.

Cal. (*entering*) Are all here?

Dag. All with you; except the three
On duty, and our leader Israel,
Who is expected momently.

Cal. Where's Bertram?

Ber. Here!

Cal. Have you not been able to complete
The number wanting in your company?

Ber. I had marked out some: but I have not dared

To trust them with the secret, till assured
That they were worthy faith.
Cal. There is no need
Of trusting to their faith: *who*, save ourselves
And our more chosen comrades, is aware
Fully of our intent? they think themselves
Engaged in secret to the Signory,[81]
To punish some more dissolute young nobles
Who have defied the law in their excesses;
But once drawn up, and their new swords well-fleshed
In the rank hearts of the more odious senators,
They will not hesitate to follow up
Their blow upon the others, when they see
The example of their chiefs, and I for one
Will set them such, that they for very shame
And safety will not pause till all have perished.
Ber. How say you? *all!*
Cal. Whom wouldst thou spare?
Ber. *I spare?*
I have no power to spare. I only questioned,
Thinking that even amongst these wicked men
There might be some, whose age and qualities
Might mark them out for pity.
Cal. Yes, such pity
As when the viper hath been cut to pieces,
The separate fragments quivering in the sun,
In the last energy of venomous life,
Deserve and have. Why, I should think as soon
Of pitying some particular fang which made

One in the jaw of the swoln serpent, as
Of saving one of these: they form but links
Of one long chain; one mass, one breath, one body;
They eat, and drink, and live, and breed together,
Revel, and lie, oppress, and kill in concert,—
So let them die as *one!* [82]

Dag. Should *one* survive,
He would be dangerous as the whole; it is not
Their number, be it tens or thousands, but
The spirit of this aristocracy
Which must be rooted out; and if there were
A single shoot of the old tree in life,
'Twould fasten in the soil, and spring again
To gloomy verdure and to bitter fruit.
Bertram, we must be firm!

Cal. Look to it well,
Bertram; I have an eye upon thee.

Ber. Who
Distrusts me?

Cal. Not I; for if I did so,
Thou wouldst not now be there to talk of trust:
It is thy softness, not thy want of faith,
Which makes thee to be doubted.

Ber. You should know
Who hear me, who and what I am; a man
Roused like yourselves to overthrow oppression;
A kind man, I am apt to think, as some
Of you have found me; and if brave or no,
You, Calendaro, can pronounce, who have seen me

Put to the proof; or, if you should have doubts,
I'll clear them on your person!
Cal. You are welcome,
When once our enterprise is o'er, which must not
Be interrupted by a private brawl.
Ber. I am no brawler; but can bear myself
As far among the foe as any he
Who hears me; else why have I been selected
To be of your chief comrades? but no less
I own my natural weakness; I have not
Yet learned to think of indiscriminate murder
Without some sense of shuddering; and the sight
Of blood which spouts through hoary scalps is not
To me a thing of triumph, nor the death
Of man surprised a glory. Well — too well
I know that we must do such things on those
Whose acts have raised up such avengers; but
If there were some of these who could be saved
From out this sweeping fate, for our own sakes
And for our honour, to take off some stain
Of massacre, which else pollutes it wholly,
I had been glad; and see no cause in this
For sneer, nor for suspicion!
Dag. Calm thee, Bertram;
For we suspect thee not, and take good heart.
It is the cause, and not our will, which asks
Such actions from our hands: we'll wash away
All stains in Freedom's fountain!

Enter Israel Bertuccio, *and the* Doge, *disguised.*

Dag. Welcome, Israel.

Consp. Most welcome. — Brave Bertruccio, thou art late —
Who is this stranger?

Cal. It is time to name him.
Our comrades are even now prepared to greet him
In brotherhood, as I have made it known
That thou wouldst add a brother to our cause,
Approved by thee, and thus approved by all,
Such is our trust in all thine actions. Now
Let him unfold himself.

I. Ber. Stranger, step forth!

[*The* Doge *discovers himself.*

Consp. To arms! — we are betrayed — it is the Doge!
Down with them both! our traitorous captain, and
The tyrant he hath sold us to.

Cal. (drawing his sword) Hold! Hold!
Who moves a step against them dies. Hold! hear
Bertuccio — What! are you appalled to see
A lone, unguarded, weaponless old man
Amongst you? — Israel, speak! what means this mystery?

I. Ber. Let them advance and strike at their own bosoms,
Ungrateful suicides! for on our lives
Depend their own, their fortunes, and their hopes.

Doge. Strike! — If I dreaded death, a death more fearful
Than any your rash weapons can inflict,
I should not now be here: — Oh, noble Courage!
The eldest born of Fear, which makes you brave
Against this solitary hoary head!
See the bold chiefs, who would reform a state
And shake down senates, mad with wrath and dread
At sight of one patrician! — Butcher me,
You can; I care not. — Israel, are these men
The mighty hearts you spoke of? look upon them!

Cal. Faith! he hath shamed us, and deservedly.
Was this your trust in your true chief Bertuccio,
To turn your swords against him and his guest?
Sheathe them, and hear him.

I. Ber. I disdain to speak.
They might and must have known a heart like mine
Incapable of treachery; and the power
They gave me to adopt all fitting means
To further their design was ne'er abused.
They might be certain that whoe'er was brought
By me into this council had been led
To take his choice — as brother, or as victim.

Doge. And which am I to be? your actions leave
Some cause to doubt the freedom of the choice.

I. Ber. My lord, we would have perished here together,
Had these rash men proceeded; but, behold,
They are ashamed of that mad moment's impulse,

And droop their heads; believe me, they are such
As I describe them — Speak to them.
Cal. Ay, speak;
We are all listening in wonder.[83]
I. Ber. (*addressing the Conspirators*) You are safe,
Nay, more, almost triumphant — listen then,
And know my words for truth.
Doge. You see me here,
As one of you hath said, an old, unarmed,
Defenceless man; and yesterday you saw me
Presiding in the hall of ducal state,
Apparent sovereign of our hundred isles,[84]
Robed in official purple, dealing out
The edicts of a power which is not mine,
Nor yours, but of our masters — the patricians.
Why I was there you know, or think you know;
Why I am *here*, he who hath been most wronged,
He who among you hath been most insulted,
Outraged and trodden on, until he doubt
If he be worm or no, may answer for me,
Asking of his own heart what brought him here?
You know my recent story, all men know it,
And judge of it far differently from those
Who sate in judgment to heap scorn on scorn.
But spare me the recital — it is here,
Here at my heart the outrage — but my words,
Already spent in unavailing plaints,
Would only show my feebleness the more,
And I come here to strengthen even the strong,

And urge them on to deeds, and not to war
With woman's weapons; but I need not urge you.
Our private wrongs have sprung from public vices
In this — I cannot call it commonwealth
Nor kingdom, which hath neither prince nor people,
But all the sins of the old Spartan state [85]
Without its virtues — temperance and valour.
The Lords of Lacedæmon were true soldiers,
But ours are Sybarites, while we are Helots,
Of whom I am the lowest, most enslaved;
Although dressed out to head a pageant, as
The Greeks of yore made drunk their slaves to form
A pastime for their children. You are met
To overthrow this monster of a state,
This mockery of a government, this spectre,
Which must be exorcised with blood, — and then
We will renew the times of truth and justice,
Condensing in a fair free commonwealth
Not rash equality but equal rights,
Proportioned like the columns to the temple,
Giving and taking strength reciprocal,
And making firm the whole with grace and beauty,
So that no part could be removed without
Infringement of the general symmetry.
In operating this great change, I claim
To be one of you — if you trust in me;
If not, strike home, — my life is compromised,
And I would rather fall by freemen's hands
Than live another day to act the tyrant
As delegate of tyrants: such I am not,

And never have been — read it in our annals;
I can appeal to my past government
In many lands and cities; they can tell you
If I were an oppressor, or a man
Feeling and thinking for my fellow men.
Haply had I been what the senate sought,
A thing of robes and trinkets, dizened out
To sit in state as for a sovereign's picture;
A popular scourge, a ready sentence-signer,
A stickler for the Senate and "the Forty,"
A skeptic of all measures which had not
The sanction of "the Ten," a council-fawner,
A tool, a fool, a puppet, — they had ne'er
Fostered the wretch who stung me. What I suffer
Has reached me through my pity for the people;
That many know, and they who know not yet
Will one day learn: meantime I do devote,
Whate'er the issue, my last days of life —
My present power such as it is, not that
Of Doge, but of a man who has been great
Before he was degraded to a Doge,
And still has individual means and mind;
I stake my fame (and I had fame) — my breath —
(The least of all, for its last hours are nigh)
My heart — my hope — my soul — upon this cast!
Such as I am, I offer me to you
And to your chiefs, accept me or reject me,
A Prince who fain would be a citizen
Or nothing, and who has left his throne to be so.

Cal. Long live Faliero! — Venice shall be free!

Consp. Long live Faliero!
I. Ber. Comrades! did I well?
Is not this man a host in such a cause?
Doge. This is no time for eulogies, nor place
For exultation. Am I one of you?
Cal. Ay, and the first amongst us, as thou hast been
Of Venice — be our general and chief.
Doge. Chief! — general! — I was general at Zara,
And chief in Rhodes and Cyprus, prince in Venice:
I cannot stoop —— that is, I am not fit
To lead a band of —— patriots: when I lay
Aside the dignities which I have borne,
'Tis not to put on others, but to be
Mate to my fellows — but now to the point:
Israel has stated to me your whole plan —
'Tis bold, but feasible if I assist it,
And must be set in motion instantly.
Cal. E'en when thou wilt. Is it not so, my friends?
I have disposed all for a sudden blow;
When shall it be then?
Doge. At sunrise.
Ber. So soon?
Doge. So soon? — so late — each hour accumulates
Peril on peril, and the more so now
Since I have mingled with you; — know you not
The Council, and "the Ten?" the spies, the eyes

Of the patricians dubious of their slaves,
And now more dubious of the prince they have made one?
I tell you, you must strike, and suddenly,
Full to the Hydra's heart — its heads will follow.

Cal. With all my soul and sword, I yield assent;
Our companies are ready, sixty each,
And all now under arms by Israel's order;
Each at their different place of rendezvous,
And vigilant, expectant of some blow;
Let each repair for action to his post!
And now, my lord, the signal?

Doge. When you hear
The great bell of St. Mark's, which may not be
Struck without special order of the Doge
(The last poor privilege they leave their prince),
March on St. Mark's!

I. Ber. And there? —

Doge. By different routes
Let your march be directed, every sixty
Entering a separate avenue, and still
Upon the way let your cry be of war
And of the Genoese fleet, by the first dawn
Discerned before the port; form round the palace,
Within whose court will be drawn out in arms
My nephew and the clients of our house,
Many and martial; while the bell tolls on,
Shout ye, "Saint Mark! — the foe is on our waters!"

Cal. I see it now — but on, my noble lord.

Doge. All the patricians flocking to the Council,
(Which they dare not refuse, at the dread signal
Pealing from out their patron saint's proud tower,)
Will then be gathered in unto the harvest,
And we will reap them with the sword for sickle.
If some few should be tardy or absent them,
'Twill be but to be taken faint and single,
When the majority are put to rest.

Cal. Would that the hour were come! we will not scotch,
But kill.

Ber. Once more, sir, with your pardon, I
Would now repeat the question which I asked
Before Bertuccio added to our cause
This great ally who renders it more sure,
And therefore safer, and as such admits
Some dawn of mercy to a portion of
Our victims — must all perish in this slaughter?

Cal. All who encounter me and mine, be sure,
The mercy they have shown, I show.

Consp. All! all!
Is this a time to talk of pity? when
Have they e'er shown, or felt, or feigned it?

I. Ber. Bertram,
This false compassion is a folly, and
Injustice to thy comrades and thy cause!
Dost thou not see, that if we single out
Some for escape, they live but to avenge
The fallen? and how distinguish now the innocent
From out the guilty? all their acts are *one* —

A single emanation from one body,
Together knit for our oppression! 'Tis
Much that we let their children live; I doubt
If all of these even should be set apart:
The hunter may reserve some single cub
From out the tiger's litter, but who e'er
Would seek to save the spotted sire or dam,
Unless to perish by their fangs? however,
I will abide by Doge Faliero's counsel:
Let him decide if any should be saved.

Doge. Ask me not — tempt me not with such a question —
Decide yourselves.

I. Ber. You know their private virtues
Far better than we can, to whom alone
Their public vices, and most foul oppression,
Have made them deadly; if there be amongst them
One who deserves to be repealed, pronounce.

Doge. Dolfino's father was my friend, and Lando
Fought by my side, and Marc Cornaro shared [86]
My Genoese embassy: I saved the life
Of Veniero — shall I save it twice?
Would that I could save them and Venice also!
All these men, or their fathers, were my friends
Till they became my subjects; then fell from me
As faithless leaves drop from the o'erblown flower,
And left me a lone blighted thorny stalk,
Which, in its solitude, can shelter nothing;
So, as they let me wither, let them perish!

Cal. They cannot co-exist with Venice' freedom!

Doge. Ye, though you know and feel our mutual mass
Of many wrongs, even ye are ignorant[87]
What fatal poison to the springs of life,
To human ties, and all that's good and dear,
Lurks in the present institutes of Venice:
All these men were my friends; I loved them, they
Requited honourably my regards;
We served and fought; we smiled and wept in concert;
We revelled or we sorrowed side by side;
We made alliances of blood and marriage;
We grew in years and honours fairly, — till
Their own desire, not my ambition, made
Them choose me for their prince, and then farewell!
Farewell all social memory! all thoughts
In common! and sweet bonds which link old friendships,
When the survivors of long years and actions,
Which now belong to history, soothe the days
Which yet remain by treasuring each other,
And never meet, but each beholds the mirror
Of half a century on his brother's brow,
And sees a hundred beings, now in earth,
Flit round them whispering of the days gone by,
And seeming not all dead, as long as two

Of the brave, joyous, reckless, glorious band,
Which once were one and many, still retain
A breath to sigh for them, a tongue to speak
Of deeds that else were silent, save on marble ——
Oime! Oime! — and must I do this deed?[88]

I. Ber. My lord, you are much moved: it is not now
That such things must be dwelt upon.

Doge. Your patience
A moment — I recede not: mark with me
The gloomy vices of this government.
From the hour that made me Doge, the *Doge* THEY *made* me —
Farewell the past! I died to all that had been,
Or rather they to me: no friends, no kindness,
No privacy of life — all were cut off:
They came not near me, such approach gave umbrage;
They could not love me, such was not the law;
They thwarted me, 'twas the state's policy;
They baffled me, 'twas a patrician's duty;
They wronged me, for such was to right the state;
They could not right me, that would give suspicion;
So that I was a slave to my own subjects;
So that I was a foe to my own friends;
Begirt with spies for guards — with robes for power —
With pomp for freedom — gaolers for a council —
Inquisitors for friends — and hell for life!

I had one only fount of quiet left,
And *that* they poisoned! My pure household gods[89]
Were shivered on my hearth, and o'er their shrine
Sate grinning Ribaldry and sneering Scorn.[90]

I. Ber. You have been deeply wronged, and now shall be
Nobly avenged before another night.

Doge. I had borne all — it hurt me, but I bore it —
Till this last running over of the cup
Of bitterness — until this last loud insult,
Not only unredressed, but sanctioned; then,
And thus, I cast all further feelings from me —
The feelings which they crushed for me, long, long
Before, even in their oath of false allegiance!
Even in that very hour and vow, they abjured
Their friend and made a sovereign, as boys make
Playthings, to do their pleasure — and be broken![91]
I from that hour have seen but senators
In dark suspicious conflict with the Doge,
Brooding with him in mutual hate and fear;
They dreading he should snatch the tyranny
From out their grasp, and he abhorring tyrants.
To me, then, these men have no *private* life,
Nor claim to ties they have cut off from others;
As senators for arbitrary acts
Amenable, I look on them — as such
Let them be dealt upon.[92]

Cal. And now to action!
Hence, brethren, to our posts, and may this be

The last night of mere words: I'd fain be doing!
Saint Mark's great bell at dawn shall find me wakeful!

I. Ber. Disperse then to your posts: be firm and vigilant;
Think on the wrongs we bear, the rights we claim.
This day and night shall be the last of peril!
Watch for the signal, and then march. I go
To join my band; let each be prompt to marshal
His separate charge: the Doge will now return
To the palace to prepare all for the blow.
We part to meet in freedom and in glory!

Cal. Doge, when I greet you next, my homage to you
Shall be the head of Steno on this sword!

Doge. No; let him be reserved unto the last,
Nor turn aside to strike at such a prey,[93]
Till nobler game is quarried: his offence
Was a mere ebullition of the vice,
The general corruption generated
By the foul aristocracy: he could not —
He dared not in more honourable days
Have risked it. I have merged all private wrath
Against him in the thought of our great purpose.
A slave insults me — I require his punishment
From his proud master's hands; if he refuse it,
The offence grows his, and let him answer it.

Cal. Yet, as the immediate cause of the alliance
Which consecrates our undertaking more,

I owe him such deep gratitude, that fain
I would repay him as he merits; may I?

Doge. You would but lop the hand, and I the head;
You would but smite the scholar, I the master;
You would but punish Steno, I the senate.
I cannot pause on individual hate,
In the absorbing, sweeping, whole revenge,
Which, like the sheeted fire from heaven, must blast
Without distinction, as it fell of yore,
Where the Dead Sea hath quenched two cities' ashes.

I. Ber. Away, then, to your posts! I but remain
A moment to accompany the Doge
To our late place of tryst, to see no spies
Have been upon the scout, and thence I hasten
To where my allotted band is under arms.

Cal. Farewell, then, — until dawn!

I. Ber. Success go with you!

Consp. We will not fail — Away! My lord, farewell![94]

[*The Conspirators salute the* Doge *and* Israel Bertuccio, *and retire, headed by* Philip Calendaro. *The* Doge *and* Israel Bertuccio *remain.*

I. Ber. We have them in the toil — it cannot fail!
Now thou'rt indeed a sovereign, and wilt make
A name immortal greater than the greatest:

Free citizens have struck at kings ere now;
Cæsars have fallen, and even patrician hands
Have crushed dictators, as the popular steel
Has reached patricians: but, until this hour,
What prince has plotted for his people's freedom?
Or risked a life to liberate his subjects?
For ever, and for ever, they conspire
Against the people, to abuse their hands
To chains, but laid aside to carry weapons
Against the fellow nations, so that yoke
On yoke, and slavery and death may whet,
Not glut, the never-gorged Leviathan!
Now, my lord, to our enterprise; — 'tis great,
And greater the reward; why stand you rapt?
A moment back, and you were all impatience!

Doge. And is it then decided! must they die?

I. Ber. Who?

Doge. My own friends by blood and courtesy,
And many deeds and days — the senators?

I. Ber. You passed their sentence, and it is a just one.

Doge. Ay, so it seems, and so it is to *you;*
You are a patriot, plebeian Gracchus —
The rebel's oracle, the people's tribune —
I blame you not — you act in your vocation;
They smote you, and oppressed you, and despised you;
So they have *me:* but *you* ne'er spake with them;
You never broke their bread, nor shared their salt;
You never had their wine-cup at your lips;

You grew not up with them, nor laughed, nor wept,
Nor held a revel in their company;
Ne'er smiled to see them smile, nor claimed their smile
In social interchange for yours, nor trusted
Nor wore them in your heart of hearts, as I have:
These hairs of mine are gray, and so are theirs,
The elders of the council: I remember
When all our locks were like the raven's wing,
As we went forth to take our prey around
The isles wrung from the false Mahometan;
And can I see them dabbled o'er with blood?
Each stab to them will seem my suicide.[95]

I. Ber. Doge! Doge! this vacillation is unworthy
A child; if you are not in second childhood,
Call back your nerves to your own purpose, nor
Thus shame yourself and me. By heavens! I'd rather
Forego even now, or fail in our intent,
Than see the man I venerate subside
From high resolves into such shallow weakness!
You have seen blood in battle, shed it, both
Your own and that of others; can you shrink then
From a few drops from veins of hoary vampires,
Who but give back what they have drained from millions?

Doge. Bear with me! Step by step, and blow on blow,
I will divide with you; think not I waver:

Ah! no; it is the *certainty* of all
Which I must do doth make me tremble thus.
But let these last and lingering thoughts have way
To which you only and the Night are conscious,
And both regardless; when the hour arrives,
'Tis mine to sound the knell, and strike the blow,
Which shall unpeople many palaces,
And hew the highest genealogic trees
Down to the earth, strewed with their bleeding fruit,
And crush their blossoms into barrenness:
This will I — must I — have I sworn to do,
Nor aught can turn me from my destiny;
But still I quiver to behold what I
Must be, and think what I have been! Bear with me.

I. Ber. Re-man your breast; I feel no such remorse,
I understand it not: why should you change?
You acted, and you act, on your free will.

Doge. Ay, there it is — *you* feel not, nor do I,
Else I should stab thee on the spot, to save
A thousand lives, and, killing, do no murder;
You *feel* not — *you* go to this butcher-work
As if these high-born men were steers for shambles!
When all is over, you'll be free and merry,
And calmly wash those hands incarnadine;
But I, outgoing thee and all thy fellows
In this surpassing massacre, shall be,
Shall see and feel — oh God! oh God! 'tis true,

And thou dost well to answer that it was
"My own free will and act," and yet you err,
For I *will* do this! Doubt not — fear not; I
Will be your most unmerciful accomplice!
And yet I act no more on my free will,
Nor my own feelings — both compel me back;
But there is *hell* within me and around,
And like the demon who believes and trembles
Must I abhor and do. Away! away!
Get thee unto thy fellows, I will hie me
To gather the retainers of our house.
Doubt not, Saint Mark's great bell shall wake all Venice,
Except her slaughtered senate: ere the sun
Be broad upon the Adriatic there
Shall be a voice of weeping, which shall drown
The roar of waters in the cry of blood!
I am resolved — come on.

I. Ber. With all my soul!
Keep a firm rein upon these bursts of passion;
Remember what these men have dealt to thee,
And that this sacrifice will be succeeded
By ages of prosperity and freedom
To this unshackled city:[96] a true tyrant
Would have depopulated empires, nor
Have felt the strange compunction which hath wrung you
To punish a few traitors to the people.
Trust me, such were a pity more misplaced
Than the late mercy of the state to Steno.

Doge. Man, thou hast struck upon the chord which jars
All nature from my heart. Hence to our task!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.[97]

Palazzo of the Patrician LIONI. LIONI *laying aside the mask and cloak which the Venetian Nobles wore in public, attended by a Domestic.*

Lioni. I will to rest, right weary of this revel.
The gayest we have held for many moons,
And yet, I know not why, it cheered me not;
There came a heaviness across my heart,
Which, in the lightest movement of the dance,
Though eye to eye, and hand in hand united
Even with the lady of my love, oppressed me,
And through my spirit chilled my blood, until
A damp like death rose o'er my brow; I strove
To laugh the thought away, but 'twould not be;
Through all the music ringing in my ears
A knell was sounding as distinct and clear,
Though low and far, as e'er the Adrian wave
Rose o'er the city's murmur in the night,
Dashing against the outward Lido's bulwark:
So that I left the festival before
It reached its zenith, and will woo my pillow
For thoughts more tranquil, or forgetfulness.

Antonio, take my mask and cloak, and light
The lamp within my chamber.
Ant. Yes, my lord:
Command you no refreshment?
Lioni. Nought, save sleep,
Which will not be commanded. Let me hope it,
[*Exit* Antonio.
Though my breast feels too anxious; I will try
Whether the air will calm my spirits: 'tis
A goodly night; the cloudy wind which blew
From the Levant hath crept into its cave,
And the broad moon has brightened. What a still-
ness! [*Goes to an open lattice.*
And what a contrast with the scene I left,
Where the tall torches' glare, and silver lamps'
More pallid gleam along the tapestried walls,
Spread over the reluctant gloom which haunts
Those vast and dimly-latticed galleries
A dazzling mass of artificial light,
Which showed all things, but nothing as they were.
There Age essaying to recall the past,
After long striving for the hues of youth
At the sad labour of the toilet, and
Full many a glance at the too faithful mirror,
Pranked forth in all the pride of ornament,
Forgot itself, and trusting to the falsehood
Of the indulgent beams, which show, yet hide,
Believed itself forgotten, and was fooled.
There Youth, which needed not, nor thought of such
Vain adjuncts, lavished its true bloom, and health,

And bridal beauty, in the unwholesome press
Of flushed and crowded wassailers, and wasted
Its hours of rest in dreaming this was pleasure,
And so shall waste them till the sunrise streams
On sallow cheeks and sunken eyes, which should not
Have worn this aspect yet for many a year.
The music, and the banquet, and the wine —
The garlands, the rose odours, and the flowers —
The sparkling eyes, and flashing ornaments —
The white arms and the raven hair — the braids
And bracelets; swanlike bosoms, and the necklace,
An India in itself, yet dazzling not
The eye like what it circled; the thin robes,
Floating like light clouds 'twixt our gaze and heaven;
The many-twinkling feet so small and sylphlike,
Suggesting the more secret symmetry
Of the fair forms which terminate so well —
All the delusion of the dizzy scene,
Its false and true enchantments — art and nature,
Which swam before my giddy eyes, that drank
The sight of beauty as the parched pilgrim's
On Arab sands the false mirage, which offers
A lucid lake to his eluded thirst,
Are gone. — Around me are the stars and waters —
Worlds mirrored in the ocean, goodlier sight
Than torches glared back by a gaudy glass;
And the great element, which is to space
What ocean is to earth, spreads its blue depths,
Softened with the first breathings of the spring;

The high moon sails upon her beauteous way,
Serenely smoothing o'er the lofty walls
Of those tall piles and sea-girt palaces,
Whose porphyry pillars, and whose costly fronts,
Fraught with the orient spoil of many marbles,
Like altars ranged along the broad canal,
Seem each a trophy of some mighty deed
Reared up from out the waters, scarce less strangely
Than those more massy and mysterious giants
Of architecture, those Titanian fabrics,
Which point in Egypt's plains to times that have
No other record. All is gentle: nought
Stirs rudely; but, congenial with the night,
Whatever walks is gliding like a spirit.
The tinklings of some vigilant guitars
Of sleepless lovers to a wakeful mistress,
And cautious opening of the casement, showing
That he is not unheard; while her young hand,
Fair as the moonlight of which it seems part,
So delicately white, it trembles in
The act of opening the forbidden lattice,
To let in love through music, makes his heart
Thrill like his lyre-strings at the sight; the dash
Phosphoric of the oar, or rapid twinkle
Of the far lights of skimming gondolas,
And the responsive voices of the choir
Of boatmen answering back with verse for verse;
Some dusky shadow checkering the Rialto;
Some glimmering palace roof, or tapering spire,
Are all the sights and sounds which here pervade

The ocean-born and earth-commanding city —
How sweet and soothing is this hour of calm!
I thank thee, Night! for thou hast chased away
Those horrid bodements which, amidst the throng,
I could not dissipate: and with the blessing
Of thy benign and quiet influence, —
Now will I to my couch, although to rest
Is almost wronging such a night as this ——[98]
[*A knocking is heard from without.*
Hark! what is that? or who at such a moment?[99]

Enter Antonio.

Ant. My lord, a man without, on urgent business,
Implores to be admitted.
Lioni. Is he a stranger?
Ant. His face is muffled in his cloak, but both
His voice and gestures seem familiar to me;
I craved his name, but this he seemed reluctant
To trust, save to yourself; most earnestly
He sues to be permitted to approach you.
Lioni. 'Tis a strange hour, and a suspicious bearing!
And yet there is slight peril: 'tis not in
Their houses noble men are struck at; still,
Although I know not that I have a foe
In Venice, 'twill be wise to use some caution.
Admit him, and retire; but call up quickly
Some of thy fellows, who may wait without. —
Who can this man be? —

[*Exit* Antonio *and returns with* Bertram *muffled.*

Ber. My good lord Lioni,
I have no time to lose, nor thou — dismiss
This menial hence; I would be private with you.

Lioni. It seems the voice of Bertram — Go, Antonio. [*Exit* Antonio.
Now, stranger, what would you at such an hour?

Ber. (*discovering himself*) A boon, my noble patron; you have granted
Many to your poor client, Bertram; add
This one, and make him happy.

Lioni. Thou hast known me
From boyhood, ever ready to assist thee
In all fair objects of advancement, which
Beseem one of thy station; I would promise
Ere thy request was heard, but that the hour,
Thy bearing, and this strange and hurried mode
Of suing, gives me to suspect this visit
Hath some mysterious import — but say on —
What has occurred, some rash and sudden broil? —
A cup too much, a scuffle, and a stab? —
Mere things of every day; so that thou hast not
Spilt noble blood, I guarantee thy safety;
But then thou must withdraw, for angry friends
And relatives, in the first burst of vengeance,
Are things in Venice deadlier than the laws.

Ber. My lord, I thank you; but ——

Lioni. But what? You have not
Raised a rash hand against one of our order?

If so, withdraw and fly, and own it not;[100]
I would not slay — but then I must not save thee!
He who has shed patrician blood ——
Ber. I come
To save patrician blood, and not to shed it!
And thereunto I must be speedy, for
Each minute lost may lose a life; since Time
Has changed his slow scythe for the two-edged sword,
And is about to take, instead of sand,
The dust from sepulchres to fill his hour-glass! —
Go not *thou* forth to-morrow!
Lioni. Wherefore not? —
What means this menace?
Ber. Do not seek its meaning,
But do as I implore thee; — stir not forth,
Whate'er be stirring: though the roar of crowds —
The cry of women, and the shrieks of babes —
The groans of men — the clash of arms — the sound
Of rolling drum, shrill trump, and hollow bell,
Peal in one wide alarm! — Go not forth
Until the tocsin's silent, nor even then
Till I return!
Lioni. Again, what does this mean?
Ber. Again, I tell thee, ask not; but by all
Thou holdest dear on earth or heaven — by all
The souls of thy great fathers, and thy hope
To emulate them, and to leave behind
Descendants worthy both of them and thee —
By all thou hast of blessed in hope or memory —

By all thou hast to fear here or hereafter —
By all the good deeds thou hast done to me,
Good I would now repay with greater good,[101]
Remain within — trust to thy household gods,
And to my word for safety, if thou dost
As I now counsel — but if not, thou art lost!

Lioni. I am indeed already lost in wonder;
Surely thou ravest! what have *I* to dread?
Who are my foes? or if there be such, *why*
Art *thou* leagued with them? — *thou!* or if so leagued,
Why comest thou to tell me at this hour,
And not before?

Ber. I cannot answer this.
Wilt thou go forth despite of this true warning?

Lioni. I was not born to shrink from idle threats,
The cause of which I know not: at the hour
Of council, be it soon or late, I shall not
Be found among the absent.

Ber. Say not so!
Once more, art thou determined to go forth?

Lioni. I am. Nor is there aught which shall impede me!

Ber. Then Heaven have mercy on thy soul! — Farewell! [*Going.*

Lioni. Stay — there is more in this than my own safety
Which makes me call thee back; we must not part thus:
Bertram, I have known thee long.

Ber. From childhood, signor,
You have been my protector: in the days
Of reckless infancy, when rank forgets,
Or, rather, is not yet taught to remember
Its cold prerogative, we played together;
Our sports, our smiles, our tears, were mingled oft;
My father was your father's client, I
His son's scarce less than foster-brother; years
Saw us together — happy, heart-full hours!
Oh God! the difference 'twixt those hours and this!

Lioni. Bertram, 'tis thou who hast forgotten them.

Ber. Nor now, nor ever; whatsoe'er betide,
I would have saved you: when to manhood's growth
We sprung, and you, devoted to the state,
As suits your station, the more humble Bertram
Was left unto the labours of the humble,
Still you forsook me not; and if my fortunes
Have not been towering, 'twas no fault of him
Who ofttimes rescued and supported me
When struggling with the tides of circumstance
Which bear away the weaker: noble blood
Ne'er mantled in a nobler heart than thine
Has proved to me, the poor plebeian Bertram.
Would that thy fellow senators were like thee!

Lioni. Why, what hast thou to say against the senate? [102]

Ber. Nothing.

Lioni. I know that there are angry spirits
And turbulent mutterers of stifled treason,

Who lurk in narrow places, and walk out
Muffled to whisper curses to the night;
Disbanded soldiers, discontented ruffians,
And desperate libertines who brawl in taverns;
Thou herdest not with such: 'tis true, of late
I have lost sight of thee, but thou wert wont
To lead a temperate life, and break thy bread
With honest mates, and bear a cheerful aspect.
What hath come to thee? in thy hollow eye
And hueless cheek, and thine unquiet motions,
Sorrow and shame and conscience seem at war
To waste thee.

Ber. Rather shame and sorrow light
On the accursed tyranny which rides [103]
The very air in Venice, and makes men
Madden as in the last hours of the plague
Which sweeps the soul deliriously from life!

Lioni. Some villains have been tampering with thee, Bertram;
This is not thy old language, nor own thoughts;
Some wretch has made thee drunk with disaffection:
But thou must not be lost so; thou *wert* good
And kind, and art not fit for such base acts
As vice and villany would put thee to:
Confess — confide in me — thou know'st my nature —
What is it thou and thine are bound to do,
Which should prevent thy friend, the only son
Of him who was a friend unto thy father,

So that our good-will is a heritage
We should bequeath to our posterity
Such as ourselves received it, or augmented;
I say, what is it thou must do, that I
Should deem thee dangerous, and keep the house
Like a sick girl?

Ber. Nay, question me no further:
I must be gone. ——

Lioni. And I be murdered! — say,
Was it not thus thou said'st, my gentle Bertram?

Ber. Who talks of murder? what said I of murder? —
'Tis false! I did not utter such a word.

Lioni. Thou didst not; but from out thy wolfish eye,
So changed from what I knew it, there glares forth
The gladiator. If *my* life's thine object,
Take it — I am unarmed, — and then away!
I would not hold my breath on such a tenure [104]
As the capricious mercy of such things
As thou and those who have set thee to thy task-work.

Ber. Sooner than spill thy blood, I peril mine;
Sooner than harm a hair of thine, I place
In jeopardy a thousand heads, and some
As noble, nay, even nobler than thine own.

Lioni. Ay, is it even so? Excuse me, Bertram;
I am not worthy to be singled out
From such exalted hecatombs — who are they

That *are* in danger, and that *make* the danger?

Ber. Venice, and all that she inherits, are
Divided like a house against itself,
And so will perish ere to-morrow's twilight!

Lioni. More mysteries, and awful ones! But now,
Or thou, or I, or both, it may be, are
Upon the verge of ruin; speak once out,
And thou art safe and glorious; for 'tis more
Glorious to save than slay, and slay i' the dark too —
Fie, Bertram! that was not a craft for thee!
How would it look to see upon a spear
The head of him whose heart was open to thee,
Borne by thy hand before the shuddering people?
And such may be my doom; for here I swear,
Whate'er the peril or the penalty
Of thy denunciation, I go forth,
Unless thou dost detail the cause, and show
The consequence of all which led thee here!

Ber. Is there no way to save thee? minutes fly,
And thou art lost! — *thou!* my sole benefactor,
The only being who was constant to me
Through every change. Yet, make me not a traitor!
Let me save thee — but spare my honour!

Lioni. Where
Can lie the honour in a league of murder?
And who are traitors save unto the state?

Ber. A league is still a compact, and more binding
In honest hearts when words must stand for law;
And in my mind, there is no traitor like
He whose domestic treason plants the poniard
Within the breast which trusted to his truth.
Lioni. And *who* will strike the steel to mine?
Ber. Not I;
I could have wound my soul up to all things
Save this. *Thou* must not die! and think how dear
Thy life is, when I risk so many lives,
Nay, more, the life of lives, the liberty
Of future generations, *not* to be
The assassin thou miscall'st me; — once, once more
I do adjure thee, pass not o'er thy threshold!
Lioni. It is in vain — this moment I go forth.
Ber. Then perish Venice rather than my friend!
I will disclose — ensnare — betray — destroy —
Oh, what a villain I become for thee!
Lioni. Say, rather thy friend's saviour and the state's! —
Speak — pause not — all rewards, all pledges for
Thy safety and thy welfare; wealth such as
The state accords her worthiest servants; nay,
Nobility itself I guarantee thee,
So that thou art sincere and penitent.
Ber. I have thought again: it must not be — I love thee —

Thou knowest it — that I stand here is the proof,
Not least though last; but having done my duty
By thee, I now must do it by my country!
Farewell — we meet no more in life! — farewell!

Lioni. What ho! — Antonio — Pedro — to the door!
See that none pass — arrest this man! ——

Enter ANTONIO *and other armed Domestics, who seize* BERTRAM.

Lioni. (*continues*) Take care
He hath no harm; bring me my sword and cloak,
And man the gondola with four oars — quick —
[*Exit* ANTONIO.
We will unto Giovanni Gradenigo's,
And send for Marc Cornaro: — fear not, Bertram;
This needful violence is for thy safety,
No less than for the general weal.

Ber. Where wouldst thou
Bear me a prisoner?

Lioni. Firstly to "the Ten;"
Next to the Doge.

Ber. To the Doge?

Lioni. Assuredly:
Is he not chief of the state?

Ber. Perhaps at sunrise —

Lioni. What mean you? — but we'll know anon.

Ber. Art sure?

Lioni. Sure as all gentle means can make; and if
They fail, you know "the Ten" and their tribunal,
And that St. Mark's has dungeons, and the dungeons
A rack.

Ber. Apply it then before the dawn
Now hastening into heaven. — One more such word,
And you shall perish piecemeal, by the death
You think to doom to me.

Re-enter ANTONIO.

Ant. The bark is ready,
My lord, and all prepared.

Lioni. Look to the prisoner.
Bertram, I'll reason with thee as we go
To the Magnifico's, sage Gradenigo. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Ducal Palace. — The Doge's Apartment.

The DOGE *and his nephew* BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Doge. Are all the people of our house in muster?

Ber. F. They are arrayed, and eager for the signal,
Within our palace precincts at San Polo.[105]
I come for your last orders.

Doge. It had been
As well had there been time to have got together,
From my own fief, Val di Marino, more
Of our retainers — but it is too late.

Ber. F. Methinks, my lord, 'tis better as it is:
A sudden swelling of our retinue
Had waked suspicion; and, though fierce and trusty,
The vassals of that district are too rude
And quick in quarrel to have long maintained
The secret discipline we need for such
A service, till our foes are dealt upon.

Doge. True; but when once the signal has been given,
These are the men for such an enterprise;
These city slaves have all their private bias,
Their prejudice *against* or *for* this noble,
Which may induce them to o'erdo or spare
Where mercy may be madness; the fierce peasants,
Serfs of my county of Val di Marino,
Would do the bidding of their lord without
Distinguishing for love or hate his foes;
Alike to them Marcello or Cornaro,
A Gradenigo or a Foscari;
They are not used to start at those vain names,
Nor bow the knee before a civic senate;
A chief in armour is their Suzerain,
And not a thing in robes.

Ber. F. We are enough;
And for the dispositions of our clients
Against the senate I will answer.

Doge. Well,
The die is thrown; but for a warlike service,
Done in the field, commend me to my peasants:
They made the sun shine through the host of Huns
When sallow burghers slunk back to their tents,
And cowered to hear their own victorious trumpet.
If there be small resistance, you will find
These citizens all lions, like their standard;
But if there's much to do, you'll wish with me,
A band of iron rustics at our backs.

Ber. F. Thus thinking, I must marvel you resolve
To strike the blow so suddenly.

Doge. Such blows
Must be struck suddenly or never. When
I had o'ermastered the weak false remorse
Which yearned about my heart, too fondly yielding
A moment to the feelings of old days,
I was most fain to strike; and, firstly, that
I might not yield again to such emotions;
And, secondly, because of all these men,
Save Israel and Philip Calendaro,
I know not well the courage or the faith:
To-day might find 'mongst them a traitor to us,
As yesterday a thousand to the senate;
But once in, with their hilts hot in their hands,
They must *on* for their own sakes; one stroke struck,
And the mere instinct of the first-born Cain,
Which ever lurks somewhere in human hearts,

Though circumstance may keep it in abeyance,
Will urge the rest on like to wolves; the sight
Of blood to crowds begets the thirst of more,
As the first wine-cup leads to the long revel;
And you will find a harder task to quell
Than urge them when they *have* commenced, but *till*
That moment, a mere voice, a straw, a shadow,
Are capable of turning them aside. —
How goes the night?

Ber. F. Almost upon the dawn.

Doge. Then it is time to strike upon the bell.
Are the men posted?

Ber. F. By this time they are;
But they have orders not to strike, until
They have command from you through me in person.

Doge. 'Tis well. — Will the morn never put to rest
These stars which twinkle yet o'er all the heavens?
I am settled and bound up, and being so,
The very effort which it cost me to
Resolve to cleanse this commonwealth with fire,
Now leaves my mind more steady. I have wept,
And trembled at the thought of this dread duty;
But now I have put down all idle passion,
And look the growing tempest in the face,
As doth the pilot of an admiral galley:
Yet (wouldst thou think it, kinsman?) it hath been

A greater struggle to me, than when nations
Beheld their fate merged in the approaching fight,
Where I was leader of a phalanx, where
Thousands were sure to perish — Yes, to spill
The rank polluted current from the veins
Of a few bloated despots needed more
To steel me to a purpose such as made
Timoleon immortal, than to face
The toils and dangers of a life of war.

Ber. F. It gladdens me to see your former wisdom
Subdue the furies which so wrung you ere
You were decided.

Doge. It was ever thus
With me; the hour of agitation came
In the first glimmerings of a purpose, when
Passion had too much room to sway; but in
The hour of action I have stood as calm
As were the dead who lay around me: this
They knew who made me what I am, and trusted
To the subduing power which I preserved
Over my mood, when its first burst was spent.
But they were not aware that there are things
Which make revenge a virtue by reflection,
And not an impulse of mere anger; though
The laws sleep, justice wakes, and injured souls
Oft do a public right with private wrong,
And justify their deeds unto themselves. —
Methinks the day breaks — is it not so? look,
Thine eyes are clear with youth; — the air puts on

A morning freshness, and, at least to me,
The sea looks grayer through the lattice.
Ber. F. True,
The morn is dappling in the sky.[106]
Doge. Away then!
See that they strike without delay, and with
The first toll from St. Mark's, march on the palace
With all our house's strength; here I will meet you —
The Sixteen and their companies will move
In separate columns at the self-same moment —
Be sure you post yourself at the great gate:
I would not trust "the Ten" except to us —
The rest, the rabble of patricians, may
Glut the more careless swords of those leagued with us.
Remember that the cry is still "Saint Mark!
The Genoese are come — ho! to the rescue!
Saint Mark and Liberty!" — Now — now to action!
Ber. F. Farewell then, noble uncle! we will meet
In freedom and true sovereignty, or never!
Doge. Come hither, my Bertuccio — one embrace —
Speed, for the day grows broader — Send me soon
A messenger to tell me how all goes
When you rejoin our troops, and then sound — sound
The storm-bell from Saint Mark's!

[*Exit* Bertuccio Faliero.

Doge. (*solus*) He is gone,[107]
And on each footstep moves a life. — 'Tis done.
Now the destroying angel hovers o'er
Venice, and pauses ere he pours the vial,
Even as the eagle overlooks his prey,
And for a moment, poised in middle air,
Suspends the motion of his mighty wings,
Then swoops with his unerring beak. — Thou day!
That slowly walk'st the waters! march — march on —
I would not smite i' the dark, but rather see
That no stroke errs. And you, ye blue sea-waves!
I have seen you dyed ere now, and deeply too,
With Genoese, Saracen, and Hunnish gore,
While that of Venice flowed too, but victorious;
Now thou must wear an unmixed crimson; no
Barbaric blood can reconcile us now
Unto that horrible incarnadine,
But friend or foe will roll in civic slaughter.
And have I lived to fourscore years for this?
I, who was named Preserver of the City?
I, at whose name the million's caps were flung
Into the air, and cries from tens of thousands
Rose up, imploring Heaven to send me blessings,
And fame, and length of days — to see this day?
But this day, black within the calendar,
Shall be succeeded by a bright millennium.
Doge Dandolo survived to ninety summers
To vanquish empires, and refuse their crown;

I will resign a crown, and make the state
Renew its freedom — but oh! by what means?
The noble end must justify them — What
Are a few drops of human blood? 'tis false,
The blood of tyrants is not human; they,
Like to incarnate Molochs, feed on ours,
Until 'tis time to give them to the tombs
Which they have made so populous. — Oh world!
Oh men! what are ye, and our best designs,
That we must work by crime to punish crime?
And slay as if Death had but this one gate,
When a few years would make the sword superfluous?
And I, upon the verge of th' unknown realm,
Yet send so many heralds on before me? —
I must not ponder this. [*A pause.*
Hark! was there not
A murmur as of distant voices, and
The tramp of feet in martial unison?
What phantoms even of sound our wishes raise!
It cannot be — the signal hath not rung —
Why pauses it? My nephew's messenger
Should be upon his way to me, and he
Himself perhaps even now draws grating back
Upon its ponderous hinge the steep tower portal,
Where swings the sullen huge oracular bell,[108]
Which never knells but for a princely death,
Or for a state in peril, pealing forth
Tremendous bodements; let it do its office,
And be this peal its awfullest and last

Sound till the strong tower rock! — What! silent still?
I would go forth, but that my post is here,
To be the centre of reunion to
The oft discordant elements which form
Leagues of this nature,[109] and to keep compact
The wavering of the weak, in case of conflict;
For if they should do battle, 'twill be here,
Within the palace, that the strife will thicken:
Then here must be my station, as becomes
The master-mover. —— Hark! he comes — he comes,
My nephew, brave Bertuccio's messenger. —
What tidings? Is he marching? hath he sped —
They here! — all's lost — yet will I make an effort.[110]

Enter a Signor of the Night,[111] *with Guards, etc., etc.*

Sig. Doge, I arrest thee of high treason!
Doge. Me!
Thy prince, of treason? — Who are they that dare
Cloak their own treason under such an order?
Sig. (*showing his order*) Behold my order from the assembled Ten.
Doge. And *where* are they, and *why* assembled? no
Such council can be lawful, till the prince
Preside there, and that duty's mine: on thine

I charge thee, give me way, or marshal me
To the council chamber.

Sig. Duke! it may not be:
Nor are they in the wonted Hall of Council,
But sitting in the convent of Saint Saviour's.

Doge. You dare to disobey me, then?

Sig. I serve
The state, and needs must serve it faithfully;
My warrant is the will of those who rule it.

Doge. And till that warrant has my signature
It is illegal, and, as *now* applied,
Rebellious — Hast thou weighed well thy life's worth,
That thus you dare assume a lawless function?[112]

Sig. 'Tis not my office to reply, but act —
I am placed here as guard upon thy person,
And not as judge to hear or to decide.

Doge. (*aside*) I must gain time — So that the storm-bell sound
All may be well yet. — Kinsman, speed — speed — speed! —
Our fate is trembling in the balance, and
Woe to the vanquished! be they prince and people,
Or slaves and senate —

[*The great bell of Saint Mark's tolls.*

Lo! it sounds — it tolls!

Doge. (*aloud*) Hark, Signor of the Night! and you, ye hirelings,
Who wield your mercenary staves in fear,

It is your knell — Swell on, thou lusty peal!
Now, knaves, what ransom for your lives?
Sig. Confusion!
Stand to your arms, and guard the door — all's lost
Unless that fearful bell be silenced soon.
The officer hath missed his path or purpose,
Or met some unforeseen and hideous obstacle.[113]
Anselmo, with thy company proceed
Straight to the tower; the rest remain with me.
[*Exit part of the Guard.*
Doge. Wretch! if thou wouldst have thy vile life, implore it;
It is not now a lease of sixty seconds.
Ay, send thy miserable ruffians forth;
They never shall return.
Sig. So let it be!
They die then in their duty, as will I.
Doge. Fool! the high eagle flies at nobler game
Than thou and thy base myrmidons, — live on,
So thou provok'st not peril by resistance,
And learn (if souls so much obscured can bear
To gaze upon the sunbeams) to be free.
Sig. And learn thou to be captive — It hath ceased,
[*The bell ceases to toll.*
The traitorous signal, which was to have set
The bloodhound mob on their patrician prey —
The knell hath rung, but it is not the senate's!

Doge. (*after a pause*) All's silent, and all's lost!

Sig. Now, Doge, denounce me
As rebel slave of a revolted council!
Have I not done my duty?

Doge. Peace, thou thing!
Thou hast done a worthy deed, and earned the price
Of blood, and they who use thee will reward thee.
But thou wert sent to watch, and not to prate,
As thou said'st even now — then do thine office,
But let it be in silence, as behoves thee,
Since, though thy prisoner, I am thy prince.

Sig. I did not mean to fail in the respect
Due to your rank: in this I shall obey you.

Doge. (*aside*) There now is nothing left me save to die;
And yet how near success! I would have fallen,
And proudly, in the hour of triumph, but
To miss it thus! ——

Enter other Signors of the Night, *with* Bertuccio Faliero *prisoner.*

2d Sig. We took him in the act
Of issuing from the tower, where, at his order,
As delegated from the Doge, the signal
Had thus begun to sound.

1st Sig. Are all the passes
Which lead up to the palace well secured?

2d Sig. They are — besides, it matters not; the chiefs
Are all in chains, and some even now on trial —
Their followers are dispersed, and many taken.
Ber. F. Uncle!
Doge. It is in vain to war with Fortune;
The glory hath departed from our house.
Ber. F. Who would have deemed it? — Ah! one moment sooner!
Doge. That moment would have changed the face of ages;
This gives us to eternity — We'll meet it
As men whose triumph is not in success,
But who can make their own minds all in all,
Equal to every fortune. Droop not, 'tis
But a brief passage — I would go alone,
Yet if they send us, as 'tis like, together,
Let us go worthy of our sires and selves.
Ber. F. I shall not shame you, uncle.
1st Sig. Lords, our orders
Are to keep guard on both in separate chambers,
Until the council call ye to your trial.
Doge. Our trial! will they keep their mockery up
Even to the last? but let them deal upon us,
As we had dealt on them, but with less pomp.
'Tis but a game of mutual homicides,
Who have cast lots for the first death, and they
Have won with false dice. — Who hath been our Judas?

1st Sig. I am not warranted to answer that.
Ber. F. I'll answer for thee — 'tis a certain Bertram,
Even now deposing to the secret giunta.
Doge. Bertram, the Bergamask! With what vile tools
We operate to slay or save! This creature,
Black with a double treason, now will earn
Rewards and honours, and be stamped in story
With the geese in the Capitol, which gabbled
Till Rome awoke, and had an annual triumph,
While Manlius, who hurled down the Gauls, was cast[114]
From the Tarpeian.
1st Sig. He aspired to treason,
And sought to rule the state.
Doge. He saved the state,
And sought but to reform what he revived —
But this is idle —— Come, sirs, do your work.
1st Sig. Noble Bertuccio, we must now remove you
Into an inner chamber.
Ber. F. Farewell, uncle!
If we shall meet again in life I know not,
But they perhaps will let our ashes mingle.
Doge. Yes, and our spirits, which shall yet go forth,
And do what our frail clay, thus clogged, hath failed in!
They cannot quench the memory of those

Who would have hurled them from their guilty thrones,
And such examples will find heirs, though distant.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

The Hall of the Council of Ten assembled with the additional Senators, who, on the Trials of the Conspirators for the Treason of Marino Faliero, *composed what was called the Giunta, — Guards, Officers, etc., etc. —* Israel Bertuccio *and* Philip Calendaro *as Prisoners. —* Bertram, Lioni, *and Witnesses, etc.*[115]

The Chief of the Ten, Benintende.[116]

Ben. There now rests, after such conviction of
Their manifold and manifest offences,
But to pronounce on these obdurate men
The sentence of the law: — a grievous task
To those who hear, and those who speak. Alas!
That it should fall to me! and that my days
Of office should be stigmatised through all
The years of coming time, as bearing record
To this most foul and complicated treason
Against a just and free state, known to all
The earth as being the Christian bulwark 'gainst
The Saracen and the schismatic Greek,
The savage Hun, and not less barbarous Frank;

A city which has opened India's wealth
To Europe; the last Roman refuge from
O'erwhelming Attila; the ocean's queen;
Proud Genoa's prouder rival! 'Tis to sap
The throne of such a city, these lost men
Have risked and forfeited their worthless lives —
So let them die the death.

I. Ber. We are prepared;
Your racks have done that for us. Let us die.

Ben. If ye have that to say which would obtain
Abatement of your punishment, the Giunta
Will hear you; if you have aught to confess,
Now is your time, perhaps it may avail ye.

Ber. F. We stand to hear, and not to speak.

Ben. Your crimes
Are fully proved by your accomplices,
And all which circumstance can add to aid them;
Yet we would hear from your own lips complete
Avowal of your treason: on the verge
Of that dread gulf which none repass, the truth
Alone can profit you on earth or heaven —
Say, then, what was your motive?

I. Ber. Justice!

Ben. What
Your object?

I. Ber. Freedom!

Ben. You are brief, sir.

I. Ber. So my life grows: I
Was bred a soldier, not a senator.

The Hall of the Senate, Venice.

Photogravure from a photograph.

Ben. Perhaps you think by this blunt brevity
To brave your judges to postpone the sentence?
I. Ber. Do you be brief as I am, and believe me,
I shall prefer that mercy to your pardon.
Ben. Is this your sole reply to the tribunal?
I. Ber. Go, ask your racks what they have wrung from us,
Or place us there again; we have still some blood left,
And some slight sense of pain in these wrenched limbs:
But this ye dare not do; for if we die there —
And you have left us little life to spend
Upon your engines, gorged with pangs already —
Ye lose the public spectacle, with which
You would appal your slaves to further slavery!
Groans are not words, nor agony assent,
Nor affirmation truth, if nature's sense
Should overcome the soul into a lie,
For a short respite — must we bear or die?
Ben. Say, who were your accomplices?
I. Ber. The Senate!
Ben. What do you mean?
I. Ber. Ask of the suffering people,
Whom your patrician crimes have driven to crime.
Ben. You know the Doge?
I. Ber. I served with him at Zara
In the field, when *you* were pleading here your way

To present office; we exposed our lives,
While you but hazarded the lives of others,
Alike by accusation or defence;
And, for the rest, all Venice knows her Doge,
Through his great actions, and the Senate's insults.

Ben. You have held conference with him?

I. Ber. I am weary —
Even wearier of your questions than your tortures:
I pray you pass to judgment.

Ben. It is coming.—
And you, too, Philip Calendaro, what
Have you to say why you should not be doomed?

Cal. I never was a man of many words,
And now have few left worth the utterance.

Ben. A further application of yon engine
May change your tone.

Cal. Most true, it *will* do so;
A former application did so; but
It will not change my words, or, if it did —

Ben. What then?

Cal. Will my avowal on yon rack
Stand good in law?

Ben. Assuredly.

Cal. Whoe'er
The culprit be whom I accuse of treason?

Ben. Without doubt, he will be brought up to trial.

Cal. And on this testimony would he perish?

Ben. So your confession be detailed and full,
He will stand here in peril of his life.

Cal. Then look well to thy proud self, President!
For by the eternity which yawns before me,
I swear that *thou*, and only thou, shalt be
The traitor I denounce upon that rack,
If I be stretched there for the second time.
One of the Giunta. Lord President, 'twere best proceed to judgment;
There is no more to be drawn from these men.[117]
Ben. Unhappy men! prepare for instant death.
The nature of your crime — our law — and peril
The state now stands in, leave not an hour's respite —
Guards! lead them forth, and upon the balcony
Of the red columns, where, on festal Thursday,[118]
The Doge stands to behold the chase of bulls,
Let them be justified: and leave exposed
Their wavering relics, in the place of judgment,
To the full view of the assembled people! —
And Heaven have mercy on their souls!
The Giunta. Amen!
I. Ber. Signors, farewell! we shall not all again
Meet in one place.
Ben. And lest they should essay
To stir up the distracted multitude —
Guards! let their mouths be gagged[119] even in the act
Of execution. — Lead them hence!

Cal. What! must we
Not even say farewell to some fond friend,
Nor leave a last word with our confessor?

Ben. A priest is waiting in the antechamber;
But, for your friends, such interviews would be
Painful to them, and useless all to you.

Cal. I knew that we were gagged in life; at least
All those who had not heart to risk their lives
Upon their open thoughts; but still I deemed
That in the last few moments, the same idle
Freedom of speech accorded to the dying,
Would not now be denied to us; but since ——

I. Ber. Even let them have their way, brave Calendaro!
What matter a few syllables? let's die
Without the slightest show of favour from them;
So shall our blood more readily arise
To Heaven against them, and more testify
To their atrocities, than could a volume
Spoken or written of our dying words!
They tremble at our voices — nay, they dread
Our very silence — let them live in fear! —
Leave them unto their thoughts, and let us now
Address our own above! — Lead on; we are ready.

Cal. Israel, hadst thou but hearkened unto me
It had not now been thus; and yon pale villain,
The coward Bertram, would ——

I. Ber. Peace, Calendaro!
What brooks it now to ponder upon this?

Ber. Alas! I fain you died in peace with me:
I did not seek this task; 'twas forced upon me:
Say, you forgive me, though I never can
Retrieve my own forgiveness — frown not thus!

I. Ber. I die and pardon thee!

Cal. (*spitting at him*) [120] I die and scorn thee!

[*Exeunt* Israel Bertuccio *and* Philip Calendaro, *Guards, etc.*

Ben. Now that these criminals have been disposed of,
'Tis time that we proceed to pass our sentence
Upon the greatest traitor upon record
In any annals, the Doge Faliero!
The proofs and process are complete; the time
And crime require a quick procedure: shall
He now be called in to receive the award?

The Giunta. Ay, ay.

Ben. Avogadori, order that the Doge
Be brought before the council.

One of the Giunta. And the rest,
When shall they be brought up?

Ben. When all the chiefs
Have been disposed of. Some have fled to Chiozza;
But there are thousands in pursuit of them,
And such precaution ta'en on terra firma,
As well as in the islands, that we hope
None will escape to utter in strange lands
His libellous tale of treasons 'gainst the senate.

Enter the Doge *as Prisoner, with Guards, etc., etc.*

Ben. Doge — for such still you are, and by the law
Must be considered, till the hour shall come
When you must doff the ducal bonnet from
That head, which could not wear a crown more noble
Than empires can confer, in quiet honour,
But it must plot to overthrow your peers,
Who made you what you are, and quench in blood
A city's glory — we have laid already
Before you in your chamber at full length,
By the Avogadori, all the proofs
Which have appeared against you; and more ample
Ne'er reared their sanguinary shadows to
Confront a traitor. What have you to say
In your defence?

Doge. What shall I say to ye,
Since my defence must be your condemnation?
You are at once offenders and accusers,
Judges and executioners! — Proceed
Upon your power.

Ben. Your chief accomplices
Having confessed, there is no hope for you.

Doge. And who be they?

Ben. In number many; but
The first now stands before you in the court,
Bertram, of Bergamo, — would you question him?

Doge. (*looking at him contemptuously*) No.

Ben. And two others, Israel Bertuccio,
And Philip Calendaro, have admitted
Their fellowship in treason with the Doge!
Doge. And where are they?
Ben. Gone to their place, and now
Answering to Heaven for what they did on earth.
Doge. Ah! the plebeian Brutus, is he gone?
And the quick Cassius of the arsenal?—
How did they meet their doom?
Ben. Think of your own:
It is approaching. You decline to plead, then?[121]
Doge. I cannot plead to my inferiors, nor
Can recognise your legal power to try me.
Show me the law!
Ben. On great emergencies,
The law must be remodelled or amended:
Our fathers had not fixed the punishment
Of such a crime, as on the old Roman tables
The sentence against parricide was left
In pure forgetfulness; they could not render
That penal, which had neither name nor thought
In their great bosoms: who would have foreseen
That nature could be filed to such a crime
As sons 'gainst sires, and princes 'gainst their realms?
Your sin hath made us make a law which will
Become a precedent 'gainst such haught traitors,
As would with treason mount to tyranny;
Not even contented with a sceptre, till
They can convert it to a two-edged sword!

Was not the place of Doge sufficient for ye ?
What's nobler than the signory of Venice ?
Doge. The signory of Venice! You betrayed me —
You — you, who sit there, traitors as ye are!
From my equality with you in birth,
And my superiority in action,
You drew me from my honourable toils
In distant lands — on flood — in field — in cities —
You singled me out like a victim to
Stand crowned, but bound and helpless, at the altar
Where you alone could minister. I knew not —
I sought not — wished not — dreamed not the election,
Which reached me first at Rome, and I obeyed;
But found on my arrival, that, besides
The jealous vigilance which always led you
To mock and mar your sovereign's best intents,
You had, even in the interregnum of [122]
My journey to the capital, curtailed
And mutilated the few privileges
Yet left the duke: all this I bore, and would
Have borne, until my very hearth was stained
By the pollution of your ribaldry,
And he, the ribald, whom I see amongst you —
Fit judge in such tribunal! ——
Ben. (*interrupting him*) Michel Steno
Is here in virtue of his office, as
One of the Forty; "the Ten" having craved
A Giunta of patricians from the senate

To aid our judgment in a trial arduous
And novel as the present: he was set
Free from the penalty pronounced upon him,
Because the Doge, who should protect the law,
Seeking to abrogate all law, can claim
No punishment of others by the statutes
Which he himself denies and violates!

Doge. *His* PUNISHMENT! I rather see him *there*,
Where he now sits, to glut him with my death,
Than in the mockery of castigation,
Which your foul, outward, juggling show of justice
Decreed as sentence! Base as was his crime,
'Twas purity compared with your protection.

Ben. And can it be, that the great Doge of Venice,
With three parts of a century of years
And honours on his head, could thus allow
His fury, like an angry boy's, to master
All feeling, wisdom, faith, and fear, on such
A provocation as a young man's petulance?

Doge. A spark creates the flame — 'tis the last drop
Which makes the cup run o'er, and mine was full
Already: you oppressed the prince and people;
I would have freed both, and have failed in both:
The price of such success would have been glory,
Vengeance, and victory, and such a name
As would have made Venetian history
Rival to that of Greece and Syracuse

When they were freed, and flourished ages after,
And mine to Gelon and to Thrasybulus: —
Failing, I know the penalty of failure
Is present infamy and death — the future
Will judge, when Venice is no more, or free;
Till then, the truth is in abeyance. Pause not;
I would have shown no mercy, and I seek none;
My life was staked upon a mighty hazard,
And being lost, take what I would have taken!
I would have stood alone amidst your tombs:
Now you may flock round mine, and trample on it,
As you have done upon my heart while living.

Ben. You do confess then, and admit the justice
Of our tribunal?

Doge. I confess to have failed;
Fortune is female; from my youth her favours
Were not withheld, the fault was mine to hope
Her former smiles again at this late hour.

Ben. You do not then in aught arraign our equity?

Doge. Noble Venetians! stir me not with questions.
I am resigned to the worst; but in me still
Have something of the blood of brighter days,
And am not over-patient. Pray you, spare me
Further interrogation, which boots nothing,
Except to turn a trial to debate.
I shall but answer that which will offend you,
And please your enemies — a host already;
'Tis true, these sullen walls should yield no echo:

But walls have ears — nay, more, they have tongues; and if
There were no other way for truth to o'erleap them,[123]
You who condemn me, you who fear and slay me,
Yet could not bear in silence to your graves
What you would hear from me of good or evil;
The secret were too mighty for your souls:
Then let it sleep in mine, unless you court
A danger which would double that you escape.
Such my defence would be, had I full scope
To make it famous; for true *words* are *things*,
And dying men's are things which long outlive,
And oftentimes avenge them; bury mine,
If ye would fain survive me: take this counsel,
And though too oft ye made me live in wrath,
Let me die calmly; you may grant me this; —
I deny nothing — defend nothing — nothing
I ask of you, but silence for myself,
And sentence from the court!

Ben. This full admission
Spares us the harsh necessity of ordering
The torture to elicit the whole truth.[124]

Doge. The torture! you have put me there already,
Daily since I was Doge; but if you will
Add the corporeal rack, you may: these limbs
Will yield with age to crushing iron; but
There's that within my heart shall strain your engines.

Enter an OFFICER.

Officer. Noble Venetians! Duchess Faliero[125]
Requests admission to the Giunta's presence.

Ben. Say, conscript fathers,[126] shall she be admitted?

One of the Giunta. She may have revelations of importance
Unto the state, to justify compliance
With her request.

Ben. Is this the general will?

All. It is.

Doge. Oh, admirable laws of Venice!
Which would admit the wife, in the full hope
That she might testify against the husband.
What glory to the chaste Venetian dames!
But such blasphemers 'gainst all honour, as
Sit here, do well to act in their vocation.
Now, villain Steno! if this woman fail,
I'll pardon thee thy lie, and thy escape,
And my own violent death, and thy vile life.

The DUCHESS *enters.*[127]

Ben. Lady! this just tribunal has resolved,
Though the request be strange, to grant it, and
Whatever be its purport, to accord
A patient hearing with the due respect
Which fits your ancestry, your rank, and virtues:
But you turn pale — ho! there, look to the lady!
Place a chair instantly.

Ang. A moment's faintness —
'Tis past; I pray you pardon me, — I sit not
In presence of my prince and of my husband,
While he is on his feet.

Ben. Your pleasure, lady?

Ang. Strange rumours, but most true, if all I hear
And see be sooth, have reached me, and I come
To know the worst, even at the worst; forgive
The abruptness of my entrance and my bearing.
Is it —— I cannot speak — I cannot shape
The question — but you answer it ere spoken,
With eyes averted, and with gloomy brows —
Oh God! this is the silence of the grave!

Ben. (*after a pause*) Spare us, and spare thyself the repetition
Of our most awful, but inexorable
Duty to heaven and man!

Ang. Yet speak; I cannot —
I cannot — no — even now believe these things.
Is *he* condemned?

Ben. Alas!

Ang. And was he guilty?

Ben. Lady! the natural distraction of
Thy thoughts at such a moment makes the question
Merit forgiveness; else a doubt like this
Against a just and paramount tribunal
Were deep offence. But question even the Doge,
And if he can deny the proofs, believe him
Guiltless as thy own bosom.

Ang. Is it so?
My lord — my sovereign — my poor father's friend —
The mighty in the field, the sage in council;
Unsay the words of this man! — Thou art silent!
Ben. He hath already owned to his own guilt,[128]
Nor, as thou see'st, doth he deny it now.
Ang. Ay, but he must not die! Spare his few years,
Which grief and shame will soon cut down to days!
One day of baffled crime must not efface
Near sixteen lustres crowded with brave acts.
Ben. His doom must be fulfilled without remission
Of time or penalty — 'tis a decree.
Ang. He hath been guilty, but there may be mercy.
Ben. Not in this case with justice.
Ang. Alas! signor,
He who is only just is cruel; who
Upon the earth would live were all judged justly?
Ben. His punishment is safety to the state.
Ang. He was a subject, and hath served the state;
He was your general, and hath saved the state;
He is your sovereign, and hath ruled the state.[129]
One of the Council. He is a traitor, and betrayed the state.
Ang. And, but for him, there now had been no state

To save or to destroy; and you, who sit
There to pronounce the death of your deliverer,
Had now been groaning at a Moslem oar,
Or digging in the Hunnish mines in fetters!

One of the Council. No, lady, there are others who would die
Rather than breathe in slavery!

Ang. If there are so
Within *these* walls, *thou* art not of the number:
The truly brave are generous to the fallen! —
Is there no hope?

Ben. Lady, it cannot be.

Ang. (*turning to the Doge*) Then die Faliero! since it must be so;
But with the spirit of my father's friend.
Thou hast been guilty of a great offence,
Half-cancelled by the harshness of these men.
I would have sued to them — have prayed to them —
Have begged as famished mendicants for bread —
Have wept as they will cry unto their God
For mercy, and be answered as they answer —
Had it been fitting for thy name or mine,
And if the cruelty in their cold eyes
Had not announced the heartless wrath within.
Then, as a prince, address thee to thy doom!

Doge. I have lived too long not to know how to die!
Thy suing to these men were but the bleating
Of the lamb to the butcher, or the cry

Of seamen to the surge: I would not take
A life eternal, granted at the hands
Of wretches, from whose monstrous villanies
I sought to free the groaning nations!
Michel Steno. Doge,
A word with thee, and with this noble lady,
Whom I have grievously offended. Would
Sorrow, or shame, or penance on my part,
Could cancel the inexorable past!
But since that cannot be, as Christians let us
Say farewell, and in peace: with full contrition
I crave, not pardon, but compassion from you,
And give, however weak, my prayers for both.
Ang. Sage Benintende, now chief judge of Venice,
I speak to thee in answer to yon signor.
Inform the ribald Steno, that his words
Ne'er weighed in mind with Loredano's daughter
Further than to create a moment's pity
For such as he is: would that others had
Despised him as I pity! I prefer
My honour to a thousand lives, could such
Be multiplied in mine, but would not have
A single life of others lost for that
Which nothing human can impugn — the sense
Of virtue, looking not to what is called
A good name for reward, but to itself.
To me the scorner's words were as the wind
Unto the rock: but as there are — alas!
Spirits more sensitive, on which such things

Light as the whirlwind on the waters; souls
To whom dishonour's shadow is a substance
More terrible than death, here and hereafter;
Men whose vice is to start at vice's scoffing,
And who, though proof against all blandishments
Of pleasure, and all pangs of pain, are feeble
When the proud name on which they pinnacled
Their hopes is breathed on, jealous as the eagle
Of her high aiery; let what we now
Behold, and feel, and suffer, be a lesson
To wretches how they tamper in their spleen
With beings of a higher order. Insects
Have made the lion mad ere now; a shaft
I' the heel o'erthrew the bravest of the brave;
A wife's dishonour was the bane of Troy;
A wife's dishonour unkinged Rome for ever;
An injured husband brought the Gauls to Clusium,
And thence to Rome, which perished for a time;
An obscene gesture cost Caligula
His life, while Earth yet bore his cruelties;
A virgin's wrong made Spain a Moorish province;
And Steno's lie, couched in two worthless lines,
Hath decimated Venice, put in peril
A senate which hath stood eight hundred years,
Discrowned a prince, cut off his crownless head,
And forged new fetters for a groaning people!
Let the poor wretch, like to the courtesan
Who fired Persepolis, be proud of this,
If it so please him — 'twere a pride fit for him!
But let him not insult the last hours of

Him, who, whate'er he now is, *was* a hero,
By the intrusion of his very prayers:
Nothing of good can come from such a source,
Nor would we aught with him, nor now, nor ever:
We leave him to himself, that lowest depth
Of human baseness. Pardon is for men,
And not for reptiles — we have none for Steno,
And no resentment: things like him must sting,
And higher beings suffer; 'tis the charter
Of life. The man who dies by the adder's fang
May have the crawler crushed, but feels no anger:
'Twas the worm's nature; and some men are worms
In soul, more than the living things of tombs.[130]

Doge. (*to Ben.*) Signor! complete that which you deem your duty.

Ben. Before we can proceed upon that duty,
We would request the princess to withdraw;
'Twill move her too much to be witness to it.

Ang. I know it will, and yet I must endure it,
For 'tis a part of mine — I will not quit,
Except by force, my husband's side. — Proceed!
Nay, fear not either shriek, or sigh, or tear;
Though my heart burst, it shall be silent. — Speak!
I have that within which shall o'ermaster all.

Ben. Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice,
Count of Val di Marino, Senator,
And some time General of the Fleet and Army,
Noble Venetian, many times and oft
Intrusted by the state with high employments,

Even to the highest, listen to the sentence.
Convict by many witnesses and proofs,
And by thine own confession, of the guilt
Of treachery and treason, yet unheard of[131]
Until this trial — the decree is death.
Thy goods are confiscate unto the state,
Thy name is razed from out her records, save
Upon a public day of thanksgiving
For this our most miraculous deliverance,[132]
When thou art noted in our calendars
With earthquakes, pestilence, and foreign foes,
And the great enemy of man, as subject
Of grateful masses for Heaven's grace in snatching
Our lives and country from thy wickedness.
The place wherein as Doge thou shouldst be painted,
With thine illustrious predecessors, is
To be left vacant, with a death-black veil
Flung over these dim words engraved beneath, —
"This place is of Marino Faliero,
Decapitated for his crimes."
Doge. "His crimes!"
But let it be so: — it will be in vain.
The veil which blackens o'er this blighted name,
And hides, or seems to hide, these lineaments,
Shall draw more gazers than the thousand portraits
Which glitter round it in their pictured trappings —
Your delegated slaves — the people's tyrants![133]
"Decapitated for his crimes!" — *What* crimes?
Were it not better to record the facts,

So that the contemplator might approve,
Or at the least learn *whence* the crimes arose?
When the beholder knows a Doge conspired,
Let him be told the cause — it is your history.

Ben. Time must reply to that; our sons will judge
Their fathers' judgment, which I now pronounce.
As Doge, clad in the ducal robes and cap,
Thou shalt be led hence to the Giants' Staircase,
Where thou and all our princes are invested;
And there, the ducal crown being first resumed
Upon the spot where it was first assumed,
Thy head shall be struck off; and Heaven have mercy
Upon thy soul!

Doge. Is this the Giunta's sentence?

Ben. It is.

Doge. I can endure it. — And the time?

Ben. Must be immediate. — Make thy peace with God:
Within an hour thou must be in His presence.

Doge. I am already; and my blood will rise
To Heaven before the souls of those who shed it. —
Are all my lands confiscated?

Ben. They are;
And goods, and jewels, and all kind of treasure,
Except two thousand ducats — these dispose of.

Doge. That's harsh. — I would have fain reserved the lands
Near to Treviso, which I hold by investment

From Laurence the Count-bishop of Ceneda,
In fief perpetual to myself and heirs,
To portion them (leaving my city spoil,
My palace and my treasures, to your forfeit)
Between my consort and my kinsmen.

Ben. These
Lie under the state's ban; their chief, thy nephew,
In peril of his own life; but the council
Postpones his trial for the present. If
Thou will'st a state unto thy widowed princess,
Fear not, for we will do her justice.

Ang. Signors,
I share not in your spoil! From henceforth, know
I am devoted unto God alone,
And take my refuge in the cloister.

Doge. Come!
The hour may be a hard one, but 'twill end.
Have I aught else to undergo save death? [134]

Ben. You have nought to do, except confess and die.
The priest is robed, the scimitar is bare,
And both await without. — But, above all,
Think not to speak unto the people; they
Are now by thousands swarming at the gates,
But these are closed: the Ten, the Avogadori,
The Giunta, and the chief men of the Forty,
Alone will be beholders of thy doom,
And they are ready to attend the Doge.

Doge. The Doge!

Ben. Yes, Doge, thou hast lived and thou shalt die
A sovereign; till the moment which precedes
The separation of that head and trunk,
That ducal crown and head shall be united.
Thou hast forgot thy dignity in deigning
To plot with petty traitors; not so we,
Who in the very punishment acknowledge
The prince. Thy vile accomplices have died
The dog's death, and the wolf's; but thou shalt fall
As falls the lion by the hunters, girt
By those who feel a proud compassion for thee,
And mourn even the inevitable death
Provoked by thy wild wrath, and regal fierceness.
Now we remit thee to thy preparation:
Let it be brief, and we ourselves will be
Thy guides unto the place where first we were
United to thee as thy subjects, and
Thy senate; and must now be parted from thee
As such for ever, on the self-same spot. —
Guards! form the Doge's escort to his chamber.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Doge's Apartment.

The DOGE *as Prisoner, and the* DUCHESS *attending him.*

Doge. Now, that the priest is gone, 'twere useless all

To linger out the miserable minutes;
But one pang more, the pang of parting from thee,
And I will leave the few last grains of sand,
Which yet remain of the accorded hour,
Still falling — I have done with Time.

Ang. Alas!
And I have been the cause, the unconscious cause;
And for this funeral marriage, this black union,
Which thou, compliant with my father's wish,
Didst promise at *his* death, thou hast sealed thine own.

Doge. Not so: there was that in my spirit ever
Which shaped out for itself some great reverse;
The marvel is, it came not until now —
And yet it was foretold me.

Ang. How foretold you?

Doge. Long years ago — so long, they are a doubt
In memory, and yet they live in annals:
When I was in my youth, and served the senate
And signory as podesta and captain
Of the town of Treviso, on a day
Of festival, the sluggish bishop who
Conveyed the Host aroused my rash young anger,
By strange delay, and arrogant reply
To my reproof; I raised my hand and smote him
Until he reeled beneath his holy burthen;
And as he rose from earth again, he raised
His tremulous hands in pious wrath towards Heaven.

Thence pointing to the Host, which had fallen from
him,
He turned to me, and said, "The hour will come
When he thou hast o'erthrown shall overthrow
thee:
The glory shall depart from out thy house,
The wisdom shall be shaken from thy soul,
And in thy best maturity of mind
A madness of the heart shall seize upon thee; [135]
Passion shall tear thee when all passions cease
In other men, or mellow into virtues;
And majesty, which decks all other heads,
Shall crown to leave thee headless; honours shall
But prove to thee the heralds of destruction,
And hoary hairs of shame, and both of death,
But not such death as fits an aged man."
Thus saying, he passed on. — That hour is come.

Ang. And with this warning couldst thou not
have striven
To avert the fatal moment, and atone,
By penitence for that which thou hadst done?

Doge. I own the words went to my heart, so
much
That I remembered them amid the maze
Of life, as if they formed a spectral voice,
Which shook me in a supernatural dream;
And I repented; but 'twas not for me
To pull in resolution: what must be
I could not change, and would not fear. — Nay
more,

Thou canst not have forgot, what all remember,
That on my day of landing here as Doge,
On my return from Rome, a mist of such
Unwonted density went on before
The bucentaur, like the columnar cloud
Which ushered Israel out of Egypt, till
The pilot was misled, and disembarked us
Between the pillars of Saint Mark's, where 'tis
The custom of the state to put to death
Its criminals, instead of touching at
The Riva della Paglia, as the wont is, —
So that all Venice shuddered at the omen.

Ang. Ah! little boots it now to recollect
Such things.

Doge. And yet I find a comfort in
The thought that these things are the work of Fate;
For I would rather yield to gods than men,
Or cling to any creed of destiny,
Rather than deem these mortals, most of whom
I know to be as worthless as the dust,
And weak as worthless, more than instruments
Of an o'er-ruling power; they in themselves
Were all incapable — they could not be
Victors of him who oft had conquered for them!

Ang. Employ the minutes left in aspirations
Of a more healing nature, and in peace
Even with these wretches take thy flight to Heaven.

Doge. I *am* at peace: the peace of certainty
That a sure hour will come, when their sons' sons,
And this proud city, and these azure waters,

And all which makes them eminent and bright,
Shall be a desolation and a curse,
A hissing and a scoff unto the nations,
A Carthage, and a Tyre, an Ocean Babel!

Ang. Speak not thus now; the surge of passion still
Sweeps o'er thee to the last; thou dost deceive
Thyself, and canst not injure them — be calmer.

Doge. I stand within eternity, and see
Into eternity, and I behold —
Ay, palpable as I see thy sweet face
For the last time — the days which I denounce
Unto all time against these wave-girt walls,
And they who are indwellers.

Guard. (*coming forward*) Doge of Venice,
The Ten are in attendance on your highness.

Doge. Then farewell, Angiolina! — one embrace —
Forgive the old man who hath been to thee
A fond but fatal husband — love my memory —
I would not ask so much for me still living,
But thou canst judge of me more kindly now,
Seeing my evil feelings are at rest.
Besides, of all the fruit of these long years,
Glory, and wealth, and power, and fame, and name,
Which generally leave some flowers to bloom
Even o'er the grave, I have nothing left, not even
A little love, or friendship, or esteem,
No, not enough to extract an epitaph

"I stand within eternity and see into eternity."

Photogravure from an original drawing by Edmund H. Garrett.

Edmund H. Garrett

From ostentatious kinsmen; in one hour
I have uprooted all my former life,
And outlived everything, except thy heart,
The pure, the good, the gentle, which will oft
With unimpaired but not a clamorous grief [136]
Still keep —— Thou turn'st so pale! — Alas! she faints,
She has no breath, no pulse! — Guards! lend your aid —
I cannot leave her thus, and yet 'tis better,
Since every lifeless moment spares a pang.
When she shakes off this temporary death,
I shall be with the Eternal. — Call her women —
One look! — how cold her hand! — as cold as mine
Shall be ere she recovers. — Gently tend her,
And take my last thanks —— I am ready now.

[*The Attendants of* ANGIOLINA *enter and surround their mistress, who has fainted. — Exeunt the* DOGE, *Guards, etc., etc.*

SCENE III.

The Court of the Ducal Palace: the outer gates are shut against the people. — The DOGE *enters in his ducal robes, in procession with the Council of Ten and other Patricians, attended by the Guards, till they arrive at the top of the "Giants' Staircase" (where the Doges took the oaths); the Executioner is stationed there with his sword. — On arriving, a Chief of the Ten takes off the ducal cap from the Doge's head.*

Doge. So now the Doge is nothing, and at last
I am again Marino Faliero:
'Tis well to be so, though but for a moment.[137]
Here was I crowned, and here, bear witness, Heaven!
With how much more contentment I resign
That shining mockery, the ducal bauble,
Than I received the fatal ornament.

One of the Ten. Thou tremblest, Faliero!

Doge. 'Tis with age, then.[138]

Ben. Faliero! hast thou aught further to commend,
Compatible with justice, to the senate?

Doge. I would commend my nephew to their mercy,
My consort to their justice; for methinks
My death, and such a death, might settle all
Between the state and me.

Ben. They shall be cared for;
Even notwithstanding thine unheard-of crime.

Doge. Unheard of! ay, there's not a history
But shows a thousand crowned conspirators
Against the people; but to set them free
One sovereign only died, and one is dying.

Ben. And who were they who fell in such a cause?

Doge. The King of Sparta, and the Doge of Venice —
Agis and Faliero!

Ben. Hast thou more
To utter or to do?

Doge. May I speak ?
Ben. Thou may'st;
But recollect the people are without,
Beyond the compass of the human voice.
Doge. I speak to Time and to Eternity,[139]
Of which I grow a portion, not to man.
Ye elements! in which to be resolved
I hasten, let my voice be as a spirit
Upon you! Ye blue waves! which bore my banner,
Ye winds! which fluttered o'er as if you loved it,
And filled my swelling sails as they were wafted
To many a triumph! Thou my native earth,
Which I have bled for, and thou foreign earth,
Which drank this willing blood from many a wound!
Ye stones, in which my gore will not sink, but
Reek up to Heaven! Ye skies, which will receive it!
Thou sun! which shinest on these things, and Thou!
Who kindlest and who quenches suns![140] — Attest!
I am not innocent — but are these guiltless?
I perished, but not unavenged; far ages
Float up from the abyss of time to be,
And show these eyes, before they close, the doom
Of this proud city, and I leave my curse
On her and hers for ever! —— Yes, the hours
Are silently engendering of the day,
When she, who built 'gainst Attila a bulwark,
Shall yield, and bloodlessly and basely yield
Unto a bastard Attila, without

Shedding so much blood in her last defence
As these old veins, oft drained in shielding her,
Shall pour in sacrifice. — She shall be bought
And sold, and be an appanage to those
Who shall despise her![141] — She shall stoop to be
A province for an empire, petty town
In lieu of capital, with slaves for senates,
Beggars for nobles,[142] panders for a people!
Then when the Hebrew's in thy palaces,[143]
The Hun in thy high places, and the Greek
Walks o'er thy mart, and smiles on it for his!
When thy patricians beg their bitter bread
In narrow streets, and in their shameful need
Make their nobility a plea for pity!
Then, when the few who still retain a wreck
Of their great fathers' heritage shall fawn
Round a barbarian Vice of Kings' Vice-gerent,
Even in the palace where they swayed as sovereigns,
Even in the palace where they slew their sovereign,
Proud of some name they have disgraced, or sprung
From an adulteress boastful of her guilt
With some large gondolier or foreign soldier,
Shall bear about their bastardy in triumph
To the third spurious generation;[144] — when
Thy sons are in the lowest scale of being,
Slaves turned o'er to the vanquished by the victors,
Despised by cowards for greater cowardice,
And scorned even by the vicious for such vices
As in the monstrous grasp of their conception

Defy all codes to image or to name them;
Then, when of Cyprus, now thy subject kingdom,
All thine inheritance shall be her shame
Entailed on thy less virtuous daughters, grown
A wider proverb for worse prostitution; —
When all the ills of conquered states shall cling thee,
Vice without splendour, sin without relief
Even from the gloss of love to smooth it o'er,
But in its stead, coarse lusts of habitude,
Prurient yet passionless, cold studied lewdness,
Depraving nature's frailty to an art; —
When these and more are heavy on thee, when
Smiles without mirth, and pastimes without pleasure,
Youth without honour, age without respect,
Meanness and weakness, and a sense of woe
'Gainst which thou wilt not strive, and dar'st not murmur,[145]
Have made thee last and worst of peopled deserts,
Then, in the last gasp of thine agony,
Amidst thy many murders, think of *mine!*
Thou den of drunkards with the blood of princes![146]
Gehenna of the waters! thou sea Sodom![147]
Thus I devote thee to the infernal gods!
Thee and thy serpent seed![148]
[*Here the* Doge *turns and addresses the Executioner.*
Slave, do thine office!
Strike as I struck the foe! Strike as I would

Have struck those tyrants! Strike deep as my curse!
Strike — and but once!

[*The* DOGE *throws himself upon his knees, and as the Executioner raises his sword the scene closes.*

SCENE IV.

The Piazza and Piazzetta of Saint Mark's. — The people in crowds gathered round the grated gates of the Ducal Palace, which are shut.

First Citizen. I have gained the gate, and can discern the Ten,
Robed in their gowns of state, ranged round the Doge.

Second Cit. I cannot reach thee with mine utmost effort.
How is it? let us hear at least, since sight
Is thus prohibited unto the people,
Except the occupiers of those bars.

First Cit. One has approached the Doge, and now they strip
The ducal bonnet from his head — and now
He raises his keen eyes to Heaven; I see
Them glitter, and his lips move — Hush! hush! — no,
'Twas but a murmur — Curse upon the distance!
His words are inarticulate, but the voice
Swells up like muttered thunder; would we could
But gather a sole sentence!

Second Cit. Hush! we perhaps may catch the sound.

First Cit. 'Tis vain,
I cannot hear him. — How his hoary hair
Streams on the wind like foam upon the wave!
Now — now — he kneels — and now they form a circle
Round him, and all is hidden — but I see
The lifted sword in air —— Ah! hark! it falls!

[*The People murmur.*

Third Cit. Then they have murdered him who would have freed us.

Fourth Cit. He was a kind man to the commons ever.

Fifth Cit. Wisely they did to keep their portals barred.
Would we had known the work they were preparing
Ere we were summoned here — we would have brought
Weapons, and forced them!

Sixth Cit. Are you sure he's dead?

First Cit. I saw the sword fall — Lo! what have we here?

Enter on the Balcony of the Palace which fronts Saint Mark's Place a CHIEF OF THE TEN,[149] *with a bloody sword. He waves it thrice before the People, and exclaims,*

"Justice hath dealt upon the mighty Traitor!"

[*The gates are opened; the populace rush in towards the "Giants' Staircase," where the execution has taken place. The foremost of them exclaims to those behind,*

The gory head [150] rolls down the Giants' Steps!

[*The curtain falls.*[151]

Appendix

Note A.

[I am obliged for the following excellent translation of the old Chronicle to Mr. F. Cohen,[152] to whom the reader will find himself indebted for a version that I could not myself — though after many years' intercourse with Italian — have given by any means so purely and so faithfully.[153]]

STORY OF MARINO FALIERO, DOGE XLIX. MCCCLIV.

On the 11th day of September, in the year of our Lord 1354, Marino Faliero was elected and chosen to be the Duke of the Commonwealth of Venice. He was Count of Valdemarino, in the Marches of Treviso, and a knight, and a wealthy man to boot. As soon as the election was completed, it was resolved in the Great Council that a deputation of twelve should be despatched to Marino Faliero the duke, who was then on his way from Rome; for when he was chosen, he was embassador at the court of the Holy Father, at Rome, — the Holy Father himself held his court at Avignon. When Messer Marino Faliero the duke was about to land in this city, on the 5th day of October, 1354, a thick haze came on, and darkened the air; and he was enforced to land on the place of Saint Mark, between the two columns, on the spot where evil-doers are put to death; and all thought that this was the worst of tokens. — Nor must I forget to write that which I have read in a chronicle. When Messer Marino Faliero was podesta and captain of Treviso, the bishop delayed coming in with the holy sacrament, on a day when a procession was to

take place. Now the said Marino Faliero was so very proud and wrathful, that he buffeted the bishop, and almost struck him to the ground: and, therefore, Heaven allowed Marino Faliero to go out of his right senses, in order that he might bring himself to an evil death.

When this duke had held the dukedom during nine months and six days, he, being wicked and ambitious, sought to make himself lord of Venice, in the manner which I have read in an ancient chronicle. When the Thursday arrived upon which they were wont to hunt the bull, the bull hunt took place as usual; and, according to the usage of those times, after the bull hunt had ended, they all proceeded unto the palace of the duke, and assembled together in one of his halls; and they disported themselves with the women. And until the first bell tolled they danced, and then a banquet was served up. My lord the duke paid the expenses thereof, provided he had a duchess, and after the banquet they all returned to their homes.

Now to this feast there came a certain Ser Michele Steno, a gentleman of poor estate and very young, but crafty and daring, and who loved one of the damsels of the duchess. Ser Michele stood amongst the women upon the solajo; and he behaved indiscreetly, so that my lord the duke ordered that he should be kicked off the solajo; and the esquires of the duke flung him down from the solajo accordingly. Ser Michele thought that such an affront was beyond all bearing; and when the feast was over, and all other persons had left the palace, he, continuing heated with anger, went to the hall of audience, and wrote certain unseemly words relating to the duke and the duchess upon the chair in which the duke was used to sit; for in those days the duke did not cover his chair with cloth of sendal, but he sat in a chair of wood. Ser Michele wrote thereon: "*Marin Falier, the husband of the fair wife; others kiss her, but he keeps her.*" In the morning the words were seen, and the matter was considered to be very scandalous; and the Senate commanded the Avogadori of the commonwealth to proceed therein with the greatest diligence. A largess of great amount was immediately proffered by the Avogadori, in order to discover who had written these

words. And at length it was known that Michele Steno had written them. It was resolved in the Council of Forty that he should be arrested; and he then confessed that in the fit of vexation and spite, occasioned by his being thrust off the solajo in the presence of his mistress, he had written the words. Therefore the Council debated thereon. And the Council took his youth into consideration, and that he was a lover; and therefore they adjudged that he should be kept in close confinement during two months, and that afterward he should be banished from Venice and the state during one year. In consequence of this merciful sentence the duke became exceedingly wroth, it appearing to him that the Council had not acted in such a manner as was required by the respect due to his ducal dignity; and he said that they ought to have condemned Ser Michele to be hanged by the neck, or at least to be banished for life.

Now it was fated that my Lord Duke Marino was to have his head cut off. And as it is necessary, when any effect is to be brought about, that the cause of such effect must happen, it therefore came to pass, that on the very day after sentence had been pronounced on Ser Michele Steno, being the first day of Lent, a gentleman of the house of Barbaro, a choleric gentleman, went to the arsenal, and required certain things of the masters of the galleys. This he did in the presence of the admiral of the arsenal, and he, hearing the request, answered, No, it cannot be done. High words arose between the gentleman and the admiral, and the gentleman struck him with his fist just above the eye; and as he happened to have a ring on his finger, the ring cut the admiral and drew blood. The admiral, all bruised and bloody, ran straight to the duke to complain, and with the intent of praying him to inflict some heavy punishment upon the gentleman of Cà Barbaro. — "What wouldst thou have me do for thee?" answered the duke: "think upon the shameful gibe which hath been written concerning me; and think on the manner in which they have punished that ribald Michele Steno, who wrote it; and see how the Council of Forty respect our person." — Upon this the admiral answered, "My lord duke, if you would wish to make yourself a prince, and to cut all those cuckoldy gentle-

men to pieces, I have the heart, if you do but help me, to make you prince of all this state; and then you may punish them all." — Hearing this, the duke said, "How can such a matter be brought about?" and so they discoursed thereon.

The duke called for his nephew, Ser Bertuccio Faliero, who lived with him in the palace, and they communed about this plot. And without leaving the place, they sent for Philip Calendaro, a seaman of great repute, and for Bertuccio Israello, who was exceedingly wily and cunning. Then taking counsel amongst themselves, they agreed to call in some others; and so, for several nights successively, they met with the duke at home in his palace. And the following men were called in singly; to wit: Niccolo Fagiuolo, Giovanni da Corfu, Stefano Fagiono, Niccolo dalle Bende, Niccolo Biondo, and Stefano Trivisano. — It was concerted that sixteen or seventeen leaders should be stationed in various parts of the city, each being at the head of forty men, armed and prepared; but the followers were not to know their destination. On the appointed day they were to make affrays amongst themselves here and there, in order that the duke might have a pretence for tolling the bells of San Marco; these bells are never rung but by the order of the duke. And at the sound of bells, these sixteen or seventeen, with their followers, were to come to San Marco through the streets which open upon the piazza. And when the noble and leading citizens should come into the piazza to know the cause of the riot, then the conspirators were to cut them in pieces; and this work being finished, my Lord Marino Faliero the duke was to be proclaimed the lord of Venice. Things having been thus settled, they agreed to fulfil their intent on Wednesday, the 15th day of April, in the year 1355. So covertly did they plot, that no one ever dreamt of their machinations.

But the Lord, who hath always helped this most glorious city, and who, loving its righteousness and holiness, hath never forsaken it, inspired one Beltramo Bergamasco to be the cause of bringing the plot to light, in the following manner. This Beltramo, who belonged to Ser Niccolo Lioni of Santo Stefano, had heard a word or two of what was to take place; and so, in the before-mentioned month of April, he went to the house of the aforesaid Ser Niccolo Lioni, and told him all

the particulars of the plot. Ser Niccolo, when he heard all these things, was struck dead, as it were, with affright. He heard all the particulars; and Beltramo prayed him to keep it all secret; and if he told Ser Niccolo, it was in order that Ser Niccolo might stop at home on the 15th of April, and thus save his life. Beltramo was going, but Ser Niccolo ordered his servants to lay hands upon him, and lock him up. Ser Niccolo then went to the house of Messer Giovanni Gradenigo Nasoni, who afterward became duke, and who also lived at Santo Stefano, and told him all. The matter seemed to him to be of the very greatest importance, as indeed it was; and they two went to the house of Ser Marco Cornaro, who lived at San Felice; and, having spoken with him, they all three then determined to go back to the house of Ser Niccolo Lioni, to examine the said Beltramo; and having questioned him, and heard all that he had to say, they left him in confinement. And then they all three went into the sacristy of San Salvatore, and sent their men to summon the Councillors, the Avogadori, the Capi de' Dieci, and those of the Great Council.

When all were assembled, the whole story was told to them. They were struck dead, as it were, with affright. They determined to send for Beltramo. He was brought in before them. They examined him, and ascertained that the matter was true; and, although they were exceedingly troubled, yet they determined upon their measures. And they sent for the Capi de' Quarante, the Signori di Notte, the Capi de' Sestieri, and the Cinque della Pace; and they were ordered to associate to their men other good men and true, who were to proceed to the houses of the ringleaders of the conspiracy, and secure them. And they secured the foreman of the arsenal, in order that the conspirators might not do mischief. Toward nightfall they assembled in the palace. When they were assembled in the palace, they caused the gates of the quadrangle of the palace to be shut. And they sent to the keeper of the bell-tower, and forbade the tolling of the bells. All this was carried into effect. The before-mentioned conspirators were secured, and they were brought to the palace; and, as the Council of Ten saw that the duke was in the plot, they resolved that twenty of the leading men of the state should be

associated to them, for the purpose of consultation and deliberation, but that they should not be allowed to ballot.

The counsellors were the following: Ser Giovanni Mocenigo, of the Sestiero of San Marco; Ser Almoro Veniero da Santa Marina, of the Sestiero of Castello; Ser Tomaso Viadro, of the Sestiero of Canaregio; Ser Giovanni Sanudo, of the Sestiero of Santa Croce; Ser Pietro Trivisano, of the Sestiero of San Paolo; Ser Pantalione Barbo il Grando, of the Sestiero of Ossoduro. The Avogadori of the commonwealth were Zufredo Morosini and Ser Orio Pasqualigo; and these did not ballot. Those of the Council of Ten were Ser Giovanni Marcello, Ser Tommaso Sanudo, and Ser Micheletto Dolfino, the heads of the aforesaid Council of Ten; Ser Luca da Legge, and Ser Pietro da Mosto, inquisitors of the aforesaid Council; and Ser Marco Polani, Ser Marino Veniero, Ser Lando Lombardo, and Ser Nicoletto Trivisano, of Sant' Angelo.

Late in the night, just before the dawning, they chose a junta of twenty noblemen of Venice from amongst the wisest, and the worthiest, and the oldest. They were to give counsel, but not to ballot. And they would not admit any one of Cà Faliero. And Niccolo Faliero, and another Niccolo Faliero, of San Tomaso, were expelled from the Council because they belonged to the family of the Doge. And this resolution of creating the junta of twenty was much praised throughout the state. The following were the members of the junta of twenty: Ser Marco Giustiniani, Procuratore, Ser Andrea Erizzo, Procuratore, Ser Lionardo Giustiniani, Procuratore, Ser Andrea Contarini, Ser Simone Dandolo, Ser Nicolo Volpe, Ser Giovanni Loredano, Ser Marco Diedo, Ser Giovanni Gradenigo, Ser Andrea Cornaro, Cavaliere, Ser Marco Soranzo, Ser Rinieri du Mosto, Ser Gazano Marcello, Ser Marino Morosini, Ser Stefano Belegno, Ser Nicolo Lioni, Ser Filippo Orio, Ser Marco Trivisano, Ser Jacopo Bragadino, Ser Giovanni Foscarini.

These twenty were accordingly called in to the Council of Ten; and they sent for my Lord Marino Faliero the duke: and my Lord Marino was then consorting in the palace with people of great estate, gentlemen, and other good men, none of whom knew yet how the fact stood.

The Giant's Steps, Venice.

Photogravure from a photograph.

At the same time Bertucci Israello, who, as one of the ringleaders, was to head the conspirators in Santa Croce, was arrested and bound, and brought before the Council. Zanello del Brin, Nicoletto di Rosa, Nicoletto Alberto, and the Guardiaga were also taken, together with several seamen, and people of various ranks. These were examined, and the truth of the plot was ascertained.

On the 16th of April judgment was given in the Council of Ten, that Filippo Calendaro and Bertuccio Israello should be hanged upon the red pillars of the balcony of the palace, from which the duke is wont to look at the bull hunt: and they were hanged with gags in their mouths.

The next day the following were condemned: Niccolo Zuccuolo, Nicoletto Blondo, Nicoletto Doro, Marco Giuda, Jacomello Dagolino, Nicoletto Fidele, the son of Filippo Calendaro, Marco Torello, called Israello, Stefano Trivisano, the money changer of Santa Margherita, and Antonio dalle Bende. These were all taken at Chiozza, for they were endeavouring to escape. Afterward, by virtue of the sentence which was passed upon them in the Council of Ten, they were hanged on successive days; some singly and some in couples, upon the columns of the palace, beginning from the red columns, and so going onwards toward the canal. And other prisoners were discharged, because, although they had been involved in the conspiracy, yet they had not assisted in it: for they were given to understand by some of the heads of the plot, that they were to come armed and prepared for the service of the state, and in order to secure certain criminals; and they knew nothing else. Nicoletto Alberto, the Guardiaga, and Bartolommeo Ciricolo and his son, and several others, who were not guilty, were discharged.

On Friday, the 16th day of April, judgment was also given, in the aforesaid Council of Ten, that my Lord Marino Faliero, the duke, should have his head cut off; and that the execution should be done on the landing-place of the stone staircase, where the dukes take their oath when they first enter the palace. On the following day, the 17th of April, the doors of the palace being shut, the duke had his head cut off, about the hour of noon. And the cap of estate was taken from the

duke's head before he came down-stairs. When the execution was over, it said that one of the Council of Ten went to the columns of the palace over against the place of St. Mark, and that he showed the bloody sword unto the people, crying out with a loud voice, "The terrible doom hath fallen upon the traitor!" — and the doors were opened, and the people all rushed in to see the corpse of the duke, who had been beheaded.

It must be known that Ser Giovanni Sanudo, the councillor, was not present when the aforesaid sentence was pronounced, because he was unwell and remained at home. So that only fourteen balloted; that is to say, five councillors, and nine of the Council of Ten. And it was adjudged that all the lands and chattels of the duke, as well as of the other traitors, should be forfeited to the state. And as a grace to the duke, it was resolved in the Council of Ten, that he should be allowed to dispose of two thousand ducats out of his own property. And it was resolved that all the councillors and all the Avogadori of the commonwealth, those of the Council of Ten, and the members of the junta, who had assisted in passing sentence on the duke and the other traitors, should have the privilege of carrying arms both by day and by night in Venice, and from Grado to Cavazere. And they were also to be allowed two footmen carrying arms, the aforesaid footmen living and boarding with them in their own houses. And he who did not keep two footmen might transfer the privilege to his sons or his brothers; but only to two. Permission of carrying arms was also granted to the four notaries of the chancery, that is to say, of the Supreme Court, who took the depositions; and they were, Amedio, Nicoletto di Lorino, Steffanello, and Pietro de Compostelli, the secretaries of the Signori di Notte.

After the traitors had been hanged, and the duke had had his head cut off, the state remained in great tranquillity and peace. And, as I have read in a chronicle, the corpse of the duke was removed in a barge, with eight torches, to his tomb in the church of San Giovanni e Paolo, where it was buried. The tomb is now in that aisle in the middle of the little church of Santa Maria della Pace, which was built by Bishop Gabriel of Bergamo. It is a coffin of stone, with these words engraven

thereon: "*Heic jacet Dominus Marinus Faletro Dux.*" — And they did not paint his portrait in the hall of the Great Council; but in the place where it ought to have been you see these words: "*Hic est locus Marini Faletro decapitati pro criminibus.*" — And it is thought that his house was granted to the church of Sant' Apostolo; it was that great one near the bridge. Yet this could not be the case, or else the family bought it back from the church; for it still belongs to Cà Faliero. I must not refrain from noting that some wished to write the following words in the place where his portrait ought to have been, as aforesaid: "*Marinus Faletro Dux, temeritas me cepit. Pœnas lui, decapitatus pro criminibus.*" — Others, also, indited a couplet worthy of being inscribed upon his tomb.

"*Dux Venetum jacet heic, patriam qui prodere tentans,*
Sceptra, decus, censum perdidit, atque caput."

Note B.

PETRARCH ON THE CONSPIRACY OF MARINO FALIERO.[154]

Al giovane Doge Andrea Dandolo succedette un vecchio, il quale tardi si pose al timone della repubblica, ma sempre prima di quel, che facea d'uopo a lui, ed alla patria: egli è Marino Faliero, personaggio a me noto per antica dimestichezza. Falsa era l' opinione intorno a lui, giacchè egli si mostrò fornito più di corraggio, che di senno. Non pago della prima dignità, entrò con sinistro piede nel pubblico Palazzo: imperciocche questo Doge de Veneti, magistrato sacro in tutti i secoli, che dagli antichi fù sempre venerato qual nume in quella città, l' altr' jeri fù decollato nel vestibolo dell' istesso Palazzo. Discorrerei fin dal principio le cause di un tale evvento, e cosi vario, ed ambiguo non ne fosse il grido. Nessuno però lo scusa, tutti affermano, che egli abbia voluto cangiar qualche cosa nell' ordine della repubblica a lui tramandato dai maggiori. Che desiderava egli di più? Io son d' avviso, che egli abbia ottenuto ciò, che non si concedette a nessun altro:

mentre adempiva gli ufficj di legato presso il Pontefice, e sulle rive del Rodano trattava la pace, che io prima di lui avevo indarno tentato di conchiudere, gli fù conferito l' onore del Ducato, che ne chiedeva, ne s' aspettava. Tornato in patria, pensò a quello, cui nessuno non pose mente giammai, e soffrì quello, che a niuno accadde mai di soffrire: giacchè in quel luogo celeberrimo, e chiarissimo, e bellissimo infra tutti quelli, che io vidi, ove i suoi antenati avevano ricevuti grandissimi onori in mezzo alle pompe trionfali, ivi egli fù trascinato in modo servile, e spogliato delle insegne ducali, perdette la testa, e macchiò col proprio sangue le soglie del tempio, l' atrio del Palazzo, e le scale marmoree rendute spesse volte illustri o dalle solenni festività, o dalle ostili spoglie. Hò notato il luogo, ora noto il tempo: è l' an nodel Natale di Cristo 1355, fù il giorno 18 d' Aprile. Si alto è il grido sparso, che se alcuno esaminerà la disciplina, e le costumanze di quella città, e quanto mutamento di cose venga minacciato dalla morte di un sol uomo (quantunque molti altri, comme narrano, essendo complici, o subirono l' istesso supplicio, o lo aspettano) si accorgerà, che nulla di più grande avvenne ai nostri tempi nella Italia. Tu forse qui attendi l mio giudizio: assolvo il popolo, se credere alla fama, benchè abbia potuto e castigare più mitemente, e con maggior dolcezza vendicare il suo dolore: ma non cosi facilmente, si modera un' ira giusta insieme, e grande in un numeroso popolo principalmente, nel quale il precipitoso, ed instabile volgo aguzza gli stimoli dell' irracondia con rapidi, e sconsigliati clamori. Compatisco, e nell' istesso tempo mi adiro con quell' infelice uomo, il quale adorno di un' insolito onore, non so, che cosa si volesse negli estremi anni della sua vita: la calamità di lui diviene sempre più grave, perchè dalla sentenza contra di esso promulgata aperirà, che egli fù non solo misero, ma insano, e demente, e che con vane arti si usurpo per tanti anni una falsa fama di sapienza. Ammonisco i Dogi, i quali gli succederano, che questo e un' esempio posto inanzi ai lora occhj, quale specchio, nel quale veggano d'essere non Signori, ma Duci, anzi nemmeno Duci, ma onorati servi della Repubblica. Tu sta sano; e giacchè fluttuano le pubbliche cose, sforsiamosi di governar modestissimamente i privati nostri affari. — *Levati, Viaggi di Petrarca*, vol. iv. p. 323.

The above Italian translation from the Latin epistles of Petrarch proves —

Firstly, That Marino Faliero was a personal friend of Petrach's; "antica dimestichezza," old intimacy, is the phrase of the poet.

Secondly, That Petrarch thought that he had more courage than conduct, "più di *corraggio* che di senno."

Thirdly, That there was some jealousy on the part of Petrarch; for he says that Marino Faliero was treating of the peace which he himself had "vainly attempted to conclude."

Fourthly, That the honour of the dukedom was conferred upon him, which he neither sought nor expected, "che nè chiedeva nè aspettava," and which had never been granted to any other in like circumstances, "ciò che non si concedette a nessun altro," a proof of the high esteem in which he must have been held.

Fifthly, That he had a reputation for *wisdom*, *only* forfeited by the last enterprise of his life, "si usurpò per tanti anni una falsa fama di sapienza." — "He had usurped for so many years a false fame of wisdom," rather a difficult task, I should think. People are generally found out before eighty years of age, at least in a republic.

From these, and the other historical notes which I have collected, it may be inferred that Marino Faliero possessed many of the qualities, but not the success of a hero; and that his passions were too violent. The paltry and ignorant account of Doctor Moore falls to the ground. Petrarch says "that there had been no greater event in his times" (*our times* literally), "nostri tempi," in Italy. He also differs from the historian in saying that Faliero was "on the banks of the Rhone," instead of at Rome, when elected; the other accounts say that the deputation of the Venetian senate met him at Ravenna. How this may have been, it is not for me to decide, and is of no great importance. Had the man succeeded, he would have changed the face of Venice, and perhaps of Italy. As it is, what *are* they both?

Note C.

VENETIAN SOCIETY AND MANNERS.

"Vice without splendour, sin without relief
Even from the gloss of love to smooth it o'er;
But, in its stead, coarse lusts of habitude," etc.

— *See* p. 200.

To these attacks so frequently pointed by the government against the clergy,— to the continual struggles between the different constituted bodies, — to these enterprises carried on by the mass of the nobles against the depositaries of power,— to all those projects of innovation, which always ended by a stroke of state policy, we must add a cause not less fitted to spread contempt for ancient doctrines; *this was the excess of corruption.*

That freedom of manners, which had been long boasted of as the principal charm of Venetian society, had degenerated into scandalous licentiousness: the tie of marriage was less sacred in that Catholic country than among those nations where the laws and religion admit of its being dissolved. Because they could not break the contract, they feigned that it had not existed; and the ground of nullity, immodestly alleged by the married pair, was admitted with equal facility by priests and magistrates, alike corrupt. These divorces, veiled under another name, became so frequent, that the most important act of civil society was discovered to be amenable to a tribunal of exceptions; and to restrain the open scandal of such proceedings became the office of the police. In 1782, the Council of Ten decreed that every woman who should sue for a dissolution of her marriage should be compelled to await the decision of the judges in some convent, to be named by the court. Soon afterward the same council summoned all causes of that nature before itself. This infringement on ecclesiastical jurisdiction having occasioned some remonstrance from Rome, the council retained only the right of rejecting the petition of the married persons, and consented to refer such causes to the holy office as it should not previously have rejected.

There was a moment in which, doubtless, the destruction of private fortunes, the ruin of youth, the domestic discord occasioned by these abuses, determined the government to depart from its established maxims concerning the freedom of manners allowed the subject. All the courtesans were banished from Venice ; but their absence was not enough to reclaim and bring back good morals to a whole people brought up in the most scandalous licentiousness. Depravity reached the very bosoms of private families, and even into the cloister ; and they found themselves obliged to recall, and even to indemnify women who sometimes gained possession of important secrets, and who might be usefully employed in the ruin of men whose fortunes might have rendered them dangerous. Since that time licentiousnesss has gone on increasing ; and we have seen mothers, not only selling the innocence of their daughters, but selling it by a contract, authenticated by the signature of a public officer, and the performance of which was secured by the protection of the laws.

The parlours of the convents of noble ladies, and the houses of the courtesans, though the police carefully kept up a number of spies about them, were the only assemblies for society in Venice ; and in these two places, so different from each other, there was equal freedom. Music, collations, gallantry, were not more forbidden in the parlours than at the casinos. There were a number of casinos for the purpose of public assemblies, where gaming was the principal pursuit of the company. It was a strange sight to see persons of either sex masked, or grave in their magisterial robes, round a table, invoking chance, and giving way at one instant to the agonies of despair, at the next to the illusions of hope, and that without uttering a single word.

The rich had private casinos, but they lived *incognito* in them ; and the wives whom they abandoned found compensation in the liberty they enjoyed. The corruption of morals had deprived them of their empire. We have just reviewed the whole history of Venice, and we have not once seen them exercise the slightest influence. — *Daru : Hist. de la Répub. de Vénise*, vol. v. p. 95.

Note D.

Account of the ancient Venetian nobility, with the causes of its decay.

"She shall stoop to be
A province for an empire, petty town
In lieu of capital, with slaves for senates,
Beggars for nobles, panders for a people!"
— *Act v. Scene 3.*

The nobles of Venice, though all equal in the eye of the law, were fancifully divided into three classes: the first distinguished as that of the *sangue blò* or *sangue colombìn*, *i. e.* blue blood or pigeon's blood; the second, as the division of the *morèl de mezo*, or the middle piece, and the poorest of all as *Bernaboti*, or Barnabites, from their inhabiting small and cheap houses in the parish of St. Barnabas.

It will be easily conceived that the poor nobility must have been numerous in a state which considered all the legitimate sons of a patrician as noble; where commerce no longer offered a resource, and the only profession left was that of the law. This class, therefore, subsisting upon the employments of the republic, civil or military, at home and abroad, was necessarily ruined by the revolution. But the cause of the almost general havoc which involved the Venetian aristocracy is not so immediately visible; the less so, as the laws of the *fede-commesso*, which corresponds with our *entail*, were sufficiently rigorous in old Venice.

I shall try, according to the information I have received, to explain how this was accomplished. The first and foremost cause was the excessive indolence and profusion of the last generations of the nobility, who appear to have resembled the ancestor of Sir Roger de Coverley; who, he tells us, "would sign a deed for a mortgage covering one-half his estate with his glove on:" with this difference, however, that the Venetian patrician could only mortgage his estate during his own natural life; a circumstance which, it appears at first sight, should have been the protection of the ancient houses of Venice. The protection was, however, in most instances, of no avail.

In almost all countries the laws of honour often contravene the laws of the land, often mischievously; but they sometimes come in aid of sound morality. Such was their effect here. The law of the *fede-commesso* allowed a son to charge himself with the debts of a father, without prejudice to his successors; but it being considered as a point of honour to take up this burden, the son's son succeeded to it, and the debts of one generation were perpetuated through diverse succeeding ones.

Things were in this state when the old government was overthrown, and the law of *fede-commesso* abolished here, as well as all over the countries revolutionised by France. The consequence was the immediate seizure of property so encumbered. This was inevitable; and the creditor of the family of *Cornèr*, or any other Venetian house, seized upon his own.

Thus one of the indirect consequences of the revolution was the destruction of an immense number of Venetian families of the *sangue blò* and *morèl de mezo*. It was, however, more immediately destructive to those denominated the Barnabites, who were at once cut off from all the lucrative offices of the state. Nor was this all: the daughters of the indigent nobility had all of them pensions which they brought in dowry to their husbands; but place and pension, though bestowed for life, were annihilated, and, in the place of these, a miserable stipend of two Venetian livres a day (not quite ten-pence English) was bestowed on those who condescended to accept of it, by the mushroom municipality which flourished for its day out of the ruins of the aristocracy. Poor as this pittance was, even in this country where necessaries bear a price out of all proportion to luxuries, numbers *did* accept it, under the idea that it would be increased under happier circumstances; but the French, it will be easily believed, did not augment it, and (what could scarcely be believed but by those versed in the proceedings of the cabinet of Vienna) the Austrian government clipped this miserable mite, and clogged it with conditions which neither the revolutionary municipality nor the French were illiberal enough to impose.

The municipality gave *their* compensation, and, the whole of the *terra ferma* being in possession of the enemy, perhaps they could give no more — the municipality gave it as unre-

stricted as the pensions it was to replace: the French made no alteration in the system; but the Austrians have not only limited it to persons not having two hundred ducats a year (twenty-five pounds sterling), but have insisted upon its being spent in their own dominions. Of the rigour with which this condition is exacted, take the following example: A lady, ignorant of the regulations which had been introduced, was absent two years in the south of France; she returned, and claimed the arrears of her pension, without having specified where she had been. The arrears were paid, after the usual difficulties; but her absence having been ascertained, she was ordered to disgorge her prey, under the threat of being excluded from all further provision.

I have said, after the usual difficulties: I will now illustrate these. Another lady claimed *seven months'* arrears of pension, due during a residence in Lombardy and the Venetian state. Now, this was a claim verifiable by a single instrument, her passport, which ascertained the day of her arrival in every town, by the signature of accredited officers of the Austrian police. Notwithstanding this, she was *seven months* more before she could obtain her demand. These were spent in the presentation of petitions, always by order, always on stamped paper, and in the almost daily beat of half the official stairs of Venice, either in person or in proxy.[155]

But I willingly turn away my eyes from a picture, every detail of which is painful, and, having described the fortunes of the Venetian nobility, shall give some account of their honours. The patricians, as I said before, all equal in the eye of the law, had no titles as such, excepting that of *your Excellency;* though some bore them, as *Counts, etc.*, of *terra ferma*, before being enrolled in the nobility of Venice; and some had titles assigned them as compensations for, or rather as memorials of, fallen greatness. Thus the *Querini*, formerly lords of *Crema*, had the distinction continued to them, after *Crema* was absorbed in the Venetian state.

These families, however, usually let their titles sleep, considering the quality of an untitled Venetian patrician as superior to any other distinction. Nor does this seem to have been an odd refinement, for the old republic sold titles for a pittance

to whoever could pay for them, though such a person might not even have had the education of a gentleman.[156] It was natural, therefore, that a lord of *Crema* should fear being confounded with this countly *canaglia*, and sink his having anything in common with such a crew.

The great political revolution that has taken place, destroying the splendour of the *libro d'oro*, has induced some to produce their *terra ferma* titles; but the majority content themselves with the style of *Cavaliere*,[157] which does not necessarily denote actual knighthood, and is often used almost as liberally in Italy, as the denomination of Squire now is in England. A striking proof, indeed, of good sense and dignity was given by the great body of the Venetian nobility, on being invited by Austria to claim nobility and title from her, on the verification of their rights; the great body of them merely desiring a recognition of their rank, without availing themselves of the offer held out to them. A few, indeed, have pursued a different line of conduct, and received patents of princes, etc. — *Rose: Letters from the North of Italy*, vol. ii. p. 105.

The Vision of Judgment

By Quevedo Redivivus

Suggested by the composition so entitled by the Author of "Wat Tyler"

"A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!
I thank thee, Jew for teaching me that word."

Preface

It hath been wisely said, that "One fool makes many;" and it hath been poetically observed:

> "That fools rush in where angels fear to tread."
>
> — *Pope.*

If Mr. Southey had not rushed in where he had no business, and where he never was before, and never will be again, the following poem would not have been written. It is not impossible that it may be as good as his own, seeing that it cannot, by any species of stupidity, natural or acquired, be *worse*. The gross flattery, the dull impudence, the renegado intolerance and impious cant, of the poem by the author of "Wat Tyler," are something so stupendous as to form the sublime of himself — containing the quintessence of his own attributes.

So much for his poem — a word on his preface. In this preface it has pleased the magnanimous Laureate to draw the picture of a supposed "Satanic School," the which he doth recommend to the notice of the legislature; thereby adding to his other laurels the ambition of those of an informer. If there exists anywhere, excepting in his imagination, such a school, is he not sufficiently armed against it by his own intense vanity? The truth is, that there are certain writers whom Mr. S. imagines, like Scrub, to have "talked of *him*; for they laughed consumedly."

I think I know enough of most of the writers to whom he is supposed to allude, to assert that they, in their individual

capacities, have done more good, in the charities of life, to their fellow creatures in any one year, than Mr. Southey has done harm to himself by his absurdities in his whole life; and this is saying a great deal. But I have a few questions to ask.

Firstly, Is Mr. Southey the author of "Wat Tyler?"

Secondly, Was he not refused a remedy at law by the highest judge of his beloved England, because it was a blasphemous and seditious publication?[158]

Thirdly, Was he not entitled by William Smith, in full Parliament, "a rancorous renegado?"[159]

Fourthly, Is he not poet laureate, with his own lines on Martin the regicide staring him in the face?[160]

And, fifthly, Putting the four preceding items together, with what conscience dare *he* call the attention of the laws to the publications of others, be they what they may?

I say nothing of the cowardice of such a proceeding; its meanness speaks for itself; but I wish to touch upon the *motive*, which is neither more nor less than that Mr. S. has been laughed at a little in some recent publications, as he was of yore in the *Anti-jacobin* by his present patrons.[161] Hence all this "skimble scamble stuff" about "Satanic," and so forth. However, it is worthy of him — "*qualis ab incepto.*"

If there is anything obnoxious to the political opinions of a portion of the public in the following poem, they may thank Mr. Southey. He might have written hexameters, as he has written everything else, for aught that the writer cared — had they been upon another subject. But to attempt to canonise a monarch, who, whatever were his household virtues, was neither a successful nor a patriot king, — inasmuch as several years of his reign passed in war with America and Ireland, to say nothing of the aggression upon France, — like all other exaggeration, necessarily begets opposition. In whatever manner

he may be spoken of in this new "Vision," his *public* career will not be more favourably transmitted by history. Of his private virtues (although a little expensive to the nation) there can be no doubt.

With regard to the supernatural personages treated of, I can only say that I know as much about them, and (as an honest man) have a better right to talk of them than Robert Southey. I have also treated them more tolerantly. The way in which that poor insane creature, the Laureate, deals about his judgments in the next world, is like his own judgment in this. If it was not completely ludicrous, it would be something worse. I don't think that there is much more to say at present.

QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS.

P. S.—It is possible that some readers may object, in these objectionable times, to the freedom with which saints, angels, and spiritual persons discourse in this "Vision." But, for precedents upon such points, I must refer him to Fielding's "Journey from this World to the next," and to the visions of myself, the said Quevedo, in Spanish or translated. The reader is also requested to observe that no doctrinal tenets are insisted upon or discussed; that the person of the Deity is carefully withheld from sight, which is more than can be said for the Laureate, who hath thought proper to make him talk, not "like a school divine," but like the unscholarlike Mr. Southey. The whole action passes on the outside of heaven; and Chaucer's "Wife of Bath," Pulci's "Morgante Maggiore," Swift's "Tale of a Tub," and the other works above referred to, are cases in point of the freedom with which saints, etc., may be permitted to converse in works not intended to be serious. Q. R.

Mr. Southey being, as he says, a good Christian and vindictive, threatens, I understand, a reply to this

our answer. It is to be hoped that his visionary faculties will in the meantime have acquired a little more judgment, properly so called: otherwise he will get himself into new dilemmas. These apostate jacobins furnish rich rejoinders. Let him take a specimen. Mr. Southey laudeth grievously "one Mr. Landor," who cultivates much private renown in the shape of Latin verses; and not long ago, the poet laureate dedicated to him, it appeareth, one of his fugitive lyrics, upon the strength of a poem called "Gebir." Who could suppose, that in this same "Gebir" the aforesaid Savage Landor (for such is his grim cognomen) putteth into the infernal regions no less a person than the hero of his friend Mr. Southey's heaven, —yea, even George the Third! See also how personal Savage becometh, when he hath a mind. The following is his portrait of our late gracious sovereign:

"(Prince Gebir having descended into the infernal regions, the shades of his royal ancestors are, at his request, called up to his view; and he exclaims to his ghostly guide):

"'Aroar, what wretch that nearest us? what wretch
Is that with eyebrows white and slanting brow?
Listen! him yonder, who, bound down supine,
Shrinks yelling from that sword there, engine-hung.
He too amongst my ancestors! I hate
The despot, but the dastard I despise.
Was he our countryman?'
'Alas, O king!
Iberia bore him, but the breed accurst
Inclement winds blew blighting from north-east.'
'He was a warrior then, nor feared the gods?'
'Gebir, he feared the demons, not the gods,
Though them indeed his daily face adored;
And was no warrior, yet the thousand lives
Squandered, as stones to exercise a sling,

And the tame cruelty and cold caprice —
Oh madness of mankind ! addressed, adored ! ' ''

— *Gebir*, p. 28.

I omit noticing some edifying Ithyphallics of Savagius, wishing to keep the proper veil over them, if his grave but somewhat indiscreet worshipper will suffer it; but certainly these teachers of "great moral lessons" are apt to be found in strange company.

Prefatory Note

HAD not the chronological order been again departed from, on the same grounds already explained with reference to "Childe Harold," the reader would have had before him, ere he reaches this page of our collection, the two first cantos of "Don Juan." Those cantos were printed without Lord Byron's name; but all the world knew that they were his; and Mr. Southey was far from being singular, in lamenting and condemning the spirit in which parts of them had been written.

The Laureate, in 1821, published a piece, in English hexameters, entitled "A Vision of Judgment;" and which Lord Byron, in criticising it, laughs at as "the Apotheosis of George the Third." In the preface to this poem, after some observations on the peculiar style of its versification, Mr. Southey introduced the following remarks:

"I am well aware that the public are peculiarly intolerant of such innovations; not less so than the populace are of any foreign fashion, whether of foppery or convenience. Would that this literary intolerance were under the influence of a saner judgment, and regarded the morals more than the manner of a composition; the spirit rather than the form! Would that it were directed against those monstrous combinations of horrors and mockery, lewdness and impiety, with which English poetry has, in our days, first been polluted! For more than half a century English literature had been distinguished by its moral purity, the effect, and, in its turn, the cause of an improvement in

national manners. A father might, without apprehension of evil, have put into the hands of his children any book which issued from the press, if it did not bear, either in its title-page or frontispiece, manifest signs that it was intended as furniture for the brothel. There was no danger in any work which bore the name of a respectable publisher, or was to be procured at any respectable bookseller's. This was particularly the case with regard to our poetry. It is now no longer so: and woe to those by whom the offence cometh! The greater the talents of the offender, the greater is his guilt, and the more enduring will be his shame. Whether it be that the laws are in themselves unable to abate an evil of this magnitude, or whether it be that they are remissly administered, and with such injustice that the celebrity of an offender serves as a privilege whereby he obtains impunity, individuals are bound to consider that such pernicious works would neither be published nor written, if they were discouraged as they might, and ought to be, by public feeling: every person, therefore, who purchases such books, or admits them into his house, promotes the mischief, and thereby, as far as in him lies, becomes an aider and abettor of the crime.

"The publication of a lascivious book is one of the worst offences which can be committed against the well-being of society. It is a sin, to the consequences of which no limits can be assigned, and those consequences no after-repentance in the writer can counteract. Whatever remorse of conscience he may feel when his hour comes (and come it must!) will be of no avail. The poignancy of a death-bed repentance cannot cancel one copy of the thousands which are sent abroad; and as long as it continues to be read, so long is he the pander of posterity, and so long is he heaping up guilt upon his soul in perpetual accumulation.

"These remarks are not more severe than the offence deserves, even when applied to those immoral writers who have not been conscious of any evil intention in their writings, who would acknowledge a little levity, a little warmth of colouring, and so forth, in that sort of language with which men gloss over their favourite vices, and deceive themselves. What then should be said of those for whom the thoughtlessness and inebriety of wanton youth can no longer be pleaded, but who have written in sober manhood and with deliberate purpose? — Men of diseased hearts and depraved imaginations, who, forming a system of opinions to suit their own unhappy course of conduct, have rebelled against the holiest ordinances of human society, and hating that revealed religion which, with all their efforts and bravadoes, they are unable entirely to disbelieve, labour to make others as miserable as themselves, by infecting them with a moral virus that eats into the soul! The school which they have set up may properly be called the Satanic school; for though their productions breathe the spirit of Belial in their lascivious parts, and the spirit of Moloch in those loathsome images of atrocities and horrors which they delight to represent, they are more especially characterised by a Satanic spirit of pride and audacious impiety, which still betrays the wretched feeling of hopelessness wherewith it is allied.

"This evil is political as well as moral, for indeed moral and political evils are inseparably connected. Truly has it been affirmed by one of our ablest and clearest reasoners, that 'the destruction of governments may be proved and deduced from the general corruption of the subjects' manners, as a direct and natural cause thereof, by a demonstration as certain as any in the mathematics.' There is no maxim more frequently enforced by Machiavelli than that, where the manners of a people are generally corrupted, there the government cannot long subsist, — a truth which

all history exemplifies; and there is no means whereby that corruption can be so surely and rapidly diffused as by poisoning the waters of literature.

"Let rulers of the state look to this, in time! But, to use the words of Southey, if 'our physicians think the best way of *curing* a disease is to *pamper* it, — the Lord in mercy prepare the kingdom to suffer, what he by miracle only can prevent!'

"No apology is offered for these remarks. The subject led to them; and the occasion of introducing them was willingly taken, because it is the duty of every one, whose opinion may have any influence, to expose the drift and aim of those writers who are labouring to subvert the foundations of human virtue and of human happiness."

Lord Byron rejoined as follows:

"Mr. Southey, in his pious preface to a poem whose blasphemy is as harmless as the sedition of 'Wat Tyler,' because it is equally absurd with that sincere production, calls upon the 'legislature to look to it,' as the toleration of such writings led to the French Revolution: *not* such writings as 'Wat Tyler,' but as those of the 'Satanic School.' This is not true, and Mr. Southey knows it to be not true. Every French writer of any freedom was persecuted; Voltaire and Rousseau were exiles, Marmontel and Diderot were sent to the Bastile, and a perpetual war was waged with the whole class by the existing despotism. In the next place, the French Revolution was *not* occasioned by any writings whatsoever, but must have occurred had no such writers ever existed. It is the fashion to attribute everything to the French Revolution, and the French Revolution to everything but its real cause. That cause is obvious, — the government exacted too much, and the people could neither *give* nor *bear more*. Without this, the encyclopedists might have written their fingers off without the occurrence of a single

alteration. And the *English* revolution — (the first, I mean) — what was it occasioned by? The *Puritans* were surely as pious and moral as Wesley or his biographer? Acts — acts on the part of government, and *not* writings against them, have caused the past convulsions, and are tending to the future.

"I look upon such as inevitable, though no revolutionist: I wish to see the English constitution restored, and not destroyed. Born an aristocrat, and naturally one by temper, with the greater part of my present property in the funds, what have *I* to gain by a revolution? Perhaps I have more to lose in every way than Mr. Southey, with all his places and presents for panegyrics and abuse into the bargain. But that a revolution is inevitable, I repeat. The government may exult over the repression of petty tumults; these are but the receding waves repulsed and broken for a moment on the shore, while the great tide is still rolling on and gaining ground with every breaker. Mr. Southey accuses us of attacking the religion of the country; and is he abetting it by writing lives of *Wesley?* One mode of worship is merely destroyed by another. There never was, nor ever will be, a country without a religion. We shall be told of *France* again: but it was only Paris and a frantic party, which for a moment upheld their dogmatic nonsense of theo-philanthropy. The church of England, if overthrown, will be swept away by the sectarians and not by the skeptics. People are too wise, too well informed, too certain of their own immense importance in the realms of space, ever to submit to the impiety of doubt. There may be a few such diffident speculators, like water in the pale sunbeam of human reason, but they are very few; and their opinions, without enthusiasm or appeal to the passions, can never gain proselytes — unless, indeed, they are persecuted — *that*, to be sure, will increase anything.

"Mr. Southey, with a cowardly ferocity, exults over the anticipated 'death-bed repentance' of the objects of his dislike; and indulges himself in a pleasant 'Vision of Judgment,' in prose as well as verse, full of impious impudence. What Mr. Southey's sensations or ours may be in the awful moment of leaving this state of existence, neither he nor we can pretend to decide. In common, I presume, with most men of any reflection, *I* have not waited for a 'death-bed' to repent of many of my actions, notwithstanding the 'diabolical pride' which this pitiful renegado in his rancour would impute to those who scorn *him*. Whether upon the whole the good or evil of my deeds may preponderate is not for me to ascertain; but as my means and opportunities have been greater, I shall limit my present defence to an assertion (easily proved, if necessary) that I, 'in my degree,' have done more real good in any one given year, since I was twenty, than Mr. Southey in the whole course of his shifting and turncoat existence.[162] There are several actions to which I can look back with an honest pride, not to be damped by the calumnies of a hireling. There are others to which I recur with sorrow and repentance; but the only *act* of *my* life of which Mr. Southey can have any real knowledge, as it was one which brought me in contact with a near connection of his own,[163] did no dishonour to that connection nor to me.

"I am not ignorant of Mr. Southey's calumnies on a different occasion, knowing them to be such, which he scattered abroad on his return from Switzerland against me and others: they have done him no good in this world; and if his creed be the right one, they will do him less in the next. What *his* 'death-bed' may be, it is not my province to predicate: let him settle it with his Maker as I must do with mine. There is something at once ludicrous and blasphemous in the arrogant scribbler of all

work sitting down to deal damnation and destruction upon his fellow creatures, with 'Wat Tyler,' the 'Apotheosis of George the Third,' and the 'Elegy on Martin' the regicide, all shuffled together in his writing-desk. One of his consolations appears to be a Latin note from a work of a Mr. Landor, the author of 'Gebir,' whose friendship for Robert Southey will, it seems, 'be an honour to him when the ephemeral disputes and ephemeral reputations of the day are forgotten.' I for one neither envy him 'the friendship,' nor the glory in reversion which is to accrue from it, like Mr. Thelusson's fortune in the third and fourth generation. This friendship will probably be as memorable as his own epics, which (as I quoted to him ten or twelve years ago in 'English Bards') Porson said 'would be remembered when Homer and Virgil are forgotten, — and not till then.' For the present, I leave him."

Mr. Southey was not disposed to let this pass unanswered. He, on the 5th of January, 1822, addressed to the editor of the *London Courier* a letter, of which we shall quote all that is of importance:

"I come at once to his Lordship's charge against me, blowing away the abuse with which it is frothed, and evaporating a strong acid in which it is suspended. The residuum then appears to be, that 'Mr. Southey, on his return from Switzerland (in 1817), scattered abroad calumnies, knowing them to be such, against Lord Byron and others.' To this I reply with *a direct and positive denial.*

"If I had been told in that country that Lord Byron had turned Turk, or Monk of La Trappe, — that he had furnished a *harem*, or endowed a hospital, I might have thought the account, whichever it had been, possible, and repeated it accordingly; passing it, as it had been taken, in the small change of conversation, for no more than it was worth. In this manner I might have spoken of him, as

of Baron Geramb,[164] the Green Man,[165] the Indian Jugglers, or any other *figurante* of the time being. There was no reason for any particular delicacy on my part in speaking of his Lordship: and, indeed, I should have thought anything which might be reported of him would have injured his character as little as the story which so greatly annoyed Lord Keeper Guildford, that he had ridden a rhinoceros. He may ride a rhinoceros, and though everybody would stare, no one would wonder. But making no enquiry concerning him when I was abroad, because I felt no curiosity, I heard nothing, and had nothing to repeat. When I spoke of wonders to my friends and acquaintance on my return, it was of the flying-tree at Alpnacht, and the Eleven Thousand virgins at Cologne — not of Lord Byron. I sought for no staler subject than St. Ursula.

"Once and only once, in connection with Switzerland, I have alluded to his Lordship; and, as the passage was curtailed in the press, I take this opportunity of restoring it. In the *Quarterly Review*, speaking incidentally of the Jungfrau, I said, 'it was the scene where Lord Byron's Manfred met the Devil and bullied him — though the Devil must have won his cause before any tribunal in this world, or the next, if he had not pleaded more feebly for himself than his advocate, in a cause of canonisation, ever pleaded for him.'

"With regard to the 'others,' whom his Lordship accuses me of calumniating, I suppose he alludes to a party of his friends, whose names I found written in the album at Mont-Anvert, with an avowal of Atheism annexed, in Greek, and an indignant comment, in the same language, underneath it.[166] Those names, with that avowal and the comment, I transcribed in my note-book, and spoke of the circumstance on my return. If I had published it, the gentleman in question would not have

thought himself slandered, by having that recorded of him which he has so often recorded of himself.

"The many opprobrious appellations which Lord Byron has bestowed upon me, I leave as I find them, with the praises which he has bestowed upon himself.

> "'How easily is a noble spirit discerned
> From harsh and sulphurous matter that flies out
> In contumelies, makes a noise, and stinks!'
>
> — *B. Jonson.*

But I am accustomed to such things; and, so far from irritating me are the enemies who use such weapons, that, when I hear of their attacks, it is some satisfaction to think they have thus employed the malignity which must have been employed somewhere, and could not have been directed against any person whom it could possibly molest or injure less. The viper, however venomous in purpose, is harmless in effect, while it is biting at the file. It is seldom, indeed, that I waste a word, or a thought, upon those who are perpetually assailing me. But abhorring, as I do, the personalities which disgrace our current literature, and averse from controversy as I am, both by principle and inclination, I make no profession of non-resistance. When the offence and the offender are such as to call for the whip and the branding-iron, it has been both seen and felt that I can inflict them.

"Lord Byron's present exacerbation is evidently produced by an infliction of this kind — not by hearsay reports of my conversation, four years ago, transmitted him from England. The cause may be found in certain remarks upon the Satanic school of poetry, contained in my preface to the 'Vision of Judgment.' Well would it be for Lord Byron if he could look back upon any of his writings with as much satisfaction as I shall always do upon what is there said of that flagitious school. Many

persons, and parents especially, have expressed their gratitude to me for having applied the branding-iron where it was so richly deserved. The Edinburgh reviewer, indeed, with that honourable feeling by which his criticisms are so peculiarly distinguished, suppressing the remarks themselves, has imputed them wholly to envy on my part. I give him, in this instance, full credit for sincerity: I believe he was equally incapable of comprehending a worthier motive, or of inventing a worse; and, as I have never condescended to expose, in any instance, his pitiful malevolence, I thank him for having, in this, stripped it bare himself, and exhibited it in its bald, naked, and undisguised deformity.

"Lord Byron, like his encomiast, has not ventured to bring the matter of those animadversions into view. He conceals the fact that they are directed against the authors of blasphemous and lascivious books; against men who, not content with indulging their own vices, labour to make others the slaves of sensuality, like themselves; against public panders, who, mingling impiety with lewdness, seek at once to destroy the cement of social order, and to carry profanation and pollution into private families and into the hearts of individuals.

"His Lordship has thought it not unbecoming in him to call me a scribbler of all work. Let the word *scribbler* pass; it is an appellation which will not stick, like that of *the Satanic school*. But, if a scribbler, how am I one of *all work?* I will tell Lord Byron what I have *not* scribbled — what kind of work I have *not* done. I have never published libels upon my friends and acquaintance, expressed my sorrow for those libels, and called them in during a mood of better mind — and then reissued them, when the evil spirit, which for a time had been cast out, had returned and taken possession, with seven others, more wicked than himself. I have never abused the

power, of which every author is in some degree possessed, to wound the character of a man, or the heart of a woman. I have never sent into the world a book to which I did not dare to affix my name; or which I feared to claim in a court of justice, if it were pirated by a knavish bookseller. I have never manufactured furniture for the brothel. None of *these things* have I done; none of the foul work by which literature is perverted to the injury of mankind. My hands are clean; there is no 'damned spot' upon them — no taint, which 'all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten.'

"Of the work which I *have* done, it becomes me not here to speak, save only as relates to the Satanic school, and its Coryphæus, the author of 'Don Juan.' I have held up that school to public detestation, as enemies to the religion, the institutions, and the domestic morals of the country. I have given them a designation *to which their founder and leader answers.* I have sent a stone from my sling which has smitten their Goliath in the forehead. I have fastened his name upon the gibbet, for reproach and ignominy, as long as it shall endure. — Take it down who can!

"One word of advice to Lord Byron before I conclude. — When he attacks me again, let it be in rhyme. For one who has so little command of himself, it will be a great advantage that his temper should be obliged to *keep tune.* And while he may still indulge in the same rankness and virulence of insult, the metre will, in some degree, seem to lessen its vulgarity."

Lord Byron, without waiting for the closing hint of the foregoing letter, had already "attacked" Mr. Southey "in rhyme." On October 1, 1821, he says to Mr. Moore:

"I have written about sixty stanzas of a poem, in octave stanzas (in the Pulci style, which the fools in England think was invented by Whistlecraft — it is as old as the hills, in Italy), called 'The Vision of Judgment,' by

Quevedo Redivivus. In this it is my intention to put the said George's Apotheosis in a Whig point of view, not forgetting the Poet Laureate, for his preface and his other demerits."

Lord Byron had proceeded some length in the performance thus announced, before Mr. Southey's letter to the *Courier* fell into his hands. On seeing it, his Lordship's feelings were so excited, that he could not wait for revenge in inkshed, but on the instant despatched a cartel of mortal defiance to the Poet Laureate, through the medium of Mr. Douglas Kinnaird, — to whom he thus writes, February 6, 1822 :

"I have got Southey's pretended reply: what remains to be done is to call him out. The question is, would he come? for, if he would not, the whole thing would appear ridiculous, if I were to take a long and expensive journey to no purpose. You must be my second, and, as such, I wish to consult you. I apply to you as one well versed in the duello, or monomachie. Of course I shall come to England as privately as possible, and leave it (supposing that I was the survivor) in the same manner; having no other object which could bring me to that country except to settle quarrels accumulated during my absence."

Mr. Kinnaird, justly appreciating the momentary exacerbation under which Lord Byron had written the challenge which this letter enclosed, and fully aware how absurd the whole business would seem to his distant friend after the lapse of such a period as must intervene before the return of post from Keswick to Ravenna, put Lord Byron's warlike missive aside; and it never was heard of by Mr. Southey until after the death of its author. Meantime Lord Byron had continued his "attack in rhyme" — and *his* "Vision of Judgment," after ineffectual negotiations with various publishers in London, at length saw the light in 1822, in the pages of the unfortunate *Liberal*.

The Vision of Judgment

I.

Saint Peter sat by the celestial gate:
His keys were rusty, and the lock was dull,
So little trouble had been given of late;
Not that the place by any means was full,
But since the Gallic era "eighty-eight"
The devils had ta'en a longer, stronger pull,
And "a pull altogether," as they say
At sea — which drew most souls another way.

II.

The angels all were singing out of tune,
And hoarse with having little else to do,
Excepting to wind up the sun and moon,
Or curb a runaway young star or two,
Or wild colt of a comet, which too soon
Broke out of bounds o'er the ethereal blue,
Splitting some planet with its playful tail,
As boats are sometimes by a wanton whale.

III.

The guardian seraphs had retired on high,
Finding their charges past all care below;
Terrestrial business filled nought in the sky
Save the recording angel's black bureau;
Who found, indeed, the facts to multiply
With such rapidity of vice and woe,
That he had stripped off both his wings in quills,
And yet was in arrear of human ills.

IV.

His business so augmented of late years,
That he was forced, against his will, no doubt,
(Just like those cherubs, earthly ministers,)
For some resource to turn himself about
And claim the help of his celestial peers,
To aid him ere he should be quite worn out
By the increased demand for his remarks;
Six angels and twelve saints were named his clerks.

V.

This was a handsome board — at least for heaven;
And yet they had even then enough to do,
So many conquerors' cars were daily driven,
So many kingdoms fitted up anew;
Each day too slew its thousands six or seven,
Till at the crowning carnage, Waterloo,
They threw their pens down in divine disgust —
The page was so besmeared with blood and dust.

VI.

This by the way; 'tis not mine to record
What angels shrink from: even the very devil
On this occasion his own work abhorred,
So surfeited with the infernal revel:
Though he himself had sharpened every sword
It almost quenched his innate thirst of evil.
(Here Satan's sole good work deserves insertion —
'Tis, that he has both generals in reversion.)

VII.

Let's skip a few short years of hollow peace,
Which peopled earth no better, hell as wont,
And heaven none — they form the tyrant's lease,
With nothing but new names subscribed upon 't;
'Twill one day finish: meantime they increase,
"With seven heads and ten horns," and all in front,
Like Saint John's foretold beast; but ours are born
Less formidable in the head than horn.

VIII.

In the first year of freedom's second dawn [167]
Died George the Third; [168] although no tyrant, one
Who shielded tyrants, till each sense withdrawn
Left him nor mental nor external sun:
A better farmer ne'er brushed dew from lawn,
A worse king never left a realm undone!
He died — but left his subjects still behind,
One half as mad — and t'other no less blind.

IX.

He died! — his death made no great stir on earth;
His burial made some pomp; there was profusion
Of velvet, gilding, brass, and no great dearth
Of aught but tears — save those shed by collusion.
For these things may be bought at their true worth;
Of elegy there was the due infusion —
Bought also; and the torches, cloaks, and banners,
Heralds, and relics of old Gothic manners,

X.

Formed a sepulchral melodrame. Of all
The fools who flocked to swell or see the show,
Who cared about the corpse? The funeral
Made the attraction, and the black the woe.
There throbbed not there a thought which pierced the pall;
And when the gorgeous coffin was laid low,
It seemed the mockery of hell to fold
The rottenness of eighty years in gold.[169]

XI.

So mix his body with the dust! It might
Return to what it *must* far sooner, were
The natural compound left alone to fight
Its way back into earth, and fire, and air;

But the unnatural balsams merely blight
What nature made him at his birth, as bare
As the mere million's base unmummied clay —
Yet all his spices but prolong decay.

XII.

He's dead — and upper earth with him has done;
He's buried; save the undertaker's bill,
Or lapidary scrawl, the world is gone
For him, unless he left a German will;
But where's the proctor who will ask his son?
In whom his qualities are reigning still,
Except that household virtue, most uncommon,
Of constancy to a bad, ugly woman.

XIII.

"God save the king!" It is a large economy
In God to save the like; but if he will
Be saving, all the better; for not one am I
Of those who think damnation better still:
I hardly know too if not quite alone am I
In this small hope of bettering future ill
By circumscribing, with some slight restriction,
The eternity of hell's hot jurisdiction.

XIV.

I know this is unpopular; I know
'Tis blasphemous; I know one may be damned
For hoping no one else may e'er be so;
I know my catechism; I know we are crammed

With the best doctrines till we quite o'erflow;
I know that all save England's church have shammed,
And that the other twice two hundred churches
And synagogues have made a *damned* bad purchase.

XV.

God help us all! God help me too! I am,
God knows, as helpless as the devil can wish,
And not a whit more difficult to damn
Than is to bring to land a late-hooked fish,
Or to the butcher to purvey the lamb;
Not that I'm fit for such a noble dish
As one day will be that immortal fry
Of almost every body born to die.

XVI.

Saint Peter sat by the celestial gate,
And nodded o'er his keys; when, lo! there came
A wondrous noise he had not heard of late —
A rushing sound of wind, and stream, and flame;
In short, a roar of things extremely great,
Which would have made aught save a saint exclaim;
But he, with first a start and then a wink,
Said, "There's another star gone out, I think!"

XVII.

But ere he could return to his repose,
A cherub flapped his right wing o'er his eyes —

At which Saint Peter yawned, and rubbed his nose:
"Saint porter," said the angel, "prithee rise!"
Waving a goodly wing, which glowed, as glows
An earthly peacock's tail, with heavenly dyes:
To which the saint replied, "Well, what's the matter?
Is Lucifer come back with all this clatter?"

XVIII.

"No," quoth the cherub; "George the Third is dead."[170]
"And who *is* George the Third?" replied the apostle:
"*What George? what Third?*" "The king of England," said
The angel. "Well! he won't find kings to jostle
Him on his way; but does he wear his head?
Because the last we saw here had a tussle,
And ne'er would have got into heaven's good graces,
Had he not flung his head in all our faces.

XIX.

"He was, if I remember, king of France;[171]
That head of his, which could not keep a crown
On earth, yet ventured in my face to advance
A claim to those of martyrs — like my own:
If I had had my sword, as I had once
When I cut ears off, I had cut him down;
But having but my *keys*, and not my brand,
I only knocked his head from out his hand.

XX.

"And then he set up such a headless howl,
That all the saints came out and took him in;
And there he sits by St. Paul, cheek by jowl;
That fellow Paul — the parvenù! The skin
Of Saint Bartholomew, which makes his cowl
In heaven, and upon earth redeemed his sin
So as to make a martyr, never sped
Better than did this weak and wooden head.

XXI.

"But had it come up here upon its shoulders,
There would have been a different tale to tell:
The fellow-feeling in the saints beholders
Seems to have acted on them like a spell;
And so this very foolish head heaven solders
Back on its trunk: it may be very well,
And seems the custom here to overthrow
Whatever has been wisely done below."

XXII.

The angel answered, "Peter! do not pout:
The king who comes has head and all entire,
And never knew much what it was about —
He did as doth the puppet — by its wire,
And will be judged like all the rest, no doubt:
My business and your own is not to enquire
Into such matters, but to mind our cue —
Which is to act as we are bid to do."

XXIII.

While thus they spake, the angelic caravan,
Arriving like a rush of mighty wind,
Cleaving the fields of space, as doth the swan
Some silver stream (say Ganges, Nile, or Inde,
Or Thames, or Tweed), and 'midst them an old man
With an old soul, and both extremely blind,
Halted before the gate, and in his shroud
Seated their fellow traveller on a cloud.[172]

XXIV.

But bringing up the rear of this bright host
A Spirit of a different aspect waved
His wings, like thunder-clouds above some coast
Whose barren beach with frequent wrecks is paved;
His brow was like the deep when tempest-tossed;
Fierce and unfathomable thoughts engraved
Eternal wrath on his immortal face,
And *where* he gazed a gloom pervaded space.

XXV.

As he drew near, he gazed upon the gate
Ne'er to be entered more by him or sin,
With such a glance of supernatural hate,
As made Saint Peter wish himself within;
He pattered with his keys at a great rate,
And sweated through his apostolic skin:
Of course his perspiration was but ichor,
Or some such other spiritual liquor.

XXVI.

The very cherubs huddled all together,
Like birds when soars the falcon; and they felt
A tingling to the tip of every feather,
And formed a circle like Orion's belt
Around their poor old charge; who scarce knew whither
His guards had led him, though they gently dealt
With royal names (for by many stories,
And true, we learn the angels all are Tories).

XXVII.

As things were in this posture, the gate flew
Asunder, and the flashing of its hinges
Flung over space an universal hue
Of many-coloured flame, until its tinges
Reached even our speck of earth, and made a new
Aurora borealis spread its fringes
O'er the North Pole; the same seen, when ice-bound,
By Captain Parry's crew, in "Melville's Sound." [173]

XXVIII.

And from the gate thrown open issued beaming
A beautiful and mighty Thing of Light,[174]
Radiant with glory, like a banner streaming
Victorious from some world-o'erthrowing fight:

"'Twas the archangel Michael."

Photogravure from an original drawing by Edmund H. Garrett.

My poor comparisons must needs be teeming
With earthly likenesses, for here the night
Of clay obscures our best conceptions, saving
Johanna Southcote,[175] or Bob Southey raving.

XXIX.

'Twas the archangel Michael: all men know
The make of angels and archangels, since
There's scarce a scribbler has not one to show,
From the fiends' leader to the angels' prince.
There also are some altar-pieces, though
I really can't say that they much evince
One's inner notions of immortal spirits;
But let the connoisseurs explain *their* merits.

XXX.

Michael flew forth in glory and in good;
A goodly work of him from whom all glory
And good arise; the portal past — he stood;
Before him the young cherubs and saints hoary —
(I say *young*, begging to be understood
By looks, not years; and should be very sorry
To state, they were not older than St. Peter,
But merely that they seemed a little sweeter).

XXXI.

The cherubs and the saints bowed down before
That arch-angelic hierarch, the first
Of essences angelical, who wore
The aspect of a god; but this ne'er nursed

Pride in his heavenly bosom, in whose core
No thought, save for his Maker's service, durst
Intrude, however glorified and high;
He knew him but the viceroy of the sky.

XXXII.

He and the sombre silent Spirit met —
They knew each other both for good and ill;
Such was their power, that neither could forget
His former friend and future foe; but still
There was a high, immortal, proud regret
In either's eye, as if 'twere less their will
Than destiny to make the eternal years
Their date of war, and their "champ clos" the spheres.

XXXIII.

But here they were in neutral space: we know
From Job, that Satan hath the power to pay
A heavenly visit thrice a year or so;
And that "the sons of God," like those of clay,
Must keep him company; and we might show
From the same book, in how polite a way
The dialogue is held between the Powers
Of Good and Evil — but 'twould take up hours.

XXXIV.

And this is not a theologic tract,
To prove with Hebrew and with Arabic
If Job be allegory or a fact,
But a true narrative; and thus I pick

From out the whole but such and such an act
As sets aside the slightest thought of trick.
'Tis every tittle true, beyond suspicion,
And accurate as any other vision.

XXXV.

The spirits were in neutral space, before
The gate of heaven; like eastern thresholds is
The place where Death's grand cause is argued o'er,
And souls despatched to that world or to this;
And therefore Michael and the other wore
A civil aspect: though they did not kiss,
Yet still between his Darkness and his Brightness
There passed a mutual glance of great politeness.

XXXVI.

The archangel bowed, not like a modern beau,
But with a graceful oriental bend,
Pressing one radiant arm just where below
The heart in good men is supposed to tend.
He turned as to an equal, not too low,
But kindly; Satan met his ancient friend
With more hauteur, as might an old Castilian
Poor noble meet a mushroom rich civilian.

XXXVII.

He merely bent his diabolic brow
An instant; and then raising it, he stood

In act to assert his right or wrong, and show
Cause why King George by no means could or should
Make out a case to be exempt from woe
Eternal, more than other kings, endued
With better sense and hearts, whom history mentions,
Who long have "paved hell with their good intentions." [176]

XXXVIII.

Michael began: "What wouldst thou with this man,
Now dead, and brought before the Lord? What ill
Hath he wrought since his mortal race began,
That thou canst claim him? Speak! and do thy will,
If it be just: if in this earthly span
He hath been greatly failing to fulfil
His duties as a king and mortal, say,
And he is thine; if not, let him have way."

XXXIX.

"Michael!" replied the Prince of Air, "even here,
Before the Gate of him thou servest, must
I claim my subject: and will make appear
That as he was my worshipper in dust,
So shall he be in spirit, although dear
To thee and thine, because nor wine nor lust
Were of his weaknesses; yet on the throne
He reigned o'er millions to serve me alone.

XL.

"Look to *our* earth, or rather *mine;* it was,
Once, more thy master's: but I triumph not
In this poor planet's conquest; nor, alas!
Need he thou servest envy me my lot:
With all the myriads of bright worlds which pass
In worship round him, he may have forgot
Yon weak creation of such paltry things:
I think few worth damnation save their kings,—

XLI.

"And these but as a kind of quit-rent, to
Assert my right as lord; and even had
I such an inclination, 'twere (as you
Well know) superfluous: they are grown so bad,
That hell has nothing better left to do
Than leave them to themselves: so much more mad
And evil by their own internal curse,
Heaven cannot make them better, nor I worse.

XLII.

"Look to the earth, I said, and say again:
When this old, blind, mad, helpless, weak, poor worm
Began in youth's first bloom and flush to reign,
The world and he both wore a different form,
And much of earth and all the watery plain
Of ocean called him king: through many a storm

His isles had floated on the abyss of time;
For the rough virtues chose them for their clime.

XLIII.

"He came to his sceptre young; he leaves it old:
Look to the state in which he found his realm,
And left it; and his annals too behold,
How to a minion first he gave the helm;
How grew upon his heart a thirst for gold,
The beggar's vice, which can but overwhelm
The meanest hearts; and for the rest, but glance
Thine eye along America and France.

XLIV.

"'Tis true, he was a tool from first to last
(I have the workmen safe); but as a tool
So let him be consumed. From out the past
Of ages, since mankind have known the rule
Of monarchs — from the bloody rolls amassed
Of sin and slaughter — from the Cæsars' school,
Take the worst pupil; and produce a reign
More drenched with gore, more cumbered with the slain.

XLV.

"He ever warred with freedom and the free:
Nations as men, home subjects, foreign foes,
So that they uttered the word 'Liberty!'
Found George the Third their first opponent. Whose

History was ever stained as his will be
With national and individual woes?
I grant his household abstinence; I grant
His neutral virtues, which most monarchs want;

XLVI.

"I know he was a constant consort; own
He was a decent sire, and middling lord.
All this is much, and most upon a throne;
As temperance, if at Apicius' board,
Is more than at an anchorite's supper shown.
I grant him all the kindest can accord;
And this was well for him, but not for those
Millions who found him what oppression chose.

XLVII.

"The New World shook him off; the Old yet groans
Beneath what he and his prepared, if not
Completed: he leaves heirs on many thrones
To all his vices, without what begot
Compassion for him — his tame virtues; drones
Who sleep, or despots who have now forgot
A lesson which shall be retaught them, wake
Upon the thrones of earth; but let them quake!

XLVIII.

"Five millions of the primitive, who hold
The faith which makes ye great on earth, implored
A *part* of that vast *all* they held of old, —
Freedom to worship — not alone your Lord,

Michael, but you, and you, Saint Peter! Cold
Must be your souls, if you have not abhorred
The foe to catholic participation
In all the license of a Christian nation.

XLIX.

"True! he allowed them to pray God; but as
A consequence of prayer, refused the law
Which would have placed them upon the same base
With those who did not hold the saints in awe."
But here Saint Peter started from his place,
And cried, "You may the prisoner withdraw:
Ere heaven shall ope her portals to this Guelph,
While I am guard, may I be damned myself!

L.

"Sooner will I with Cerberus exchange
My office (and *his* is no sinecure)
Than see this royal Bedlam bigot range
The azure fields of heaven, of that be sure!"
"Saint!" replied Satan, "you do well to avenge
The wrongs he made your satellites endure;[177]
And if to this exchange you should be given,
I'll try to coax *our* Cerberus up to heaven."

LI.

Here Michael interposed: "Good saint! and devil!
Pray, not so fast; you both outrun discretion.
Saint Peter! you were wont to be more civil:
Satan! excuse this warmth of his expression,

And condescension to the vulgar's level:
Even saints sometimes forget themselves in session.
Have you got more to say?" — "No." — "If you please,
I'll trouble you to call your witnesses."

LII.

Then Satan turned and waved his swarthy hand,
Which stirred with its electric qualities
Clouds farther off than we can understand,
Although we find him sometimes in our skies;
Infernal thunder shook both sea and land
In all the planets, and hell's batteries
Let off the artillery, which Milton mentions
As one of Satan's most sublime inventions.[178]

LIII.

This was a signal unto such damned souls
As have the privilege of their damnation
Extended far beyond the mere controls
Of worlds past, present, or to come; no station
Is theirs particularly in the rolls
Of hell assigned; but where their inclination
Or business carries them in search of game,
They may range freely — being damned the same.

LIV.

They are proud of this — as very well they may,
It being a sort of knighthood, or gilt key

Stuck in their loins;[179] or like to an "entré"
Up the back stairs, or such free-masonry.
I borrow my comparisons from clay,
Being clay myself. Let not those spirits be
Offended with such base low likenesses;
We know their posts are nobler far than these.

LV.

When the great signal ran from heaven to hell —
About ten million times the distance reckoned
From our sun to its earth, as we can tell
How much time it takes up, even to a second,
For every ray that travels to dispel
The fogs of London, through which, dimly beaconed,
The weathercocks are gilt some thrice a year,
If that the *summer* is not too severe: —[180]

LVI.

I say that I can tell — 'twas half a minute:
I know the solar beams take up more time
Ere, packed up for their journey, they begin it;
But then their telegraph is less sublime,
And if they ran a race, they would not win it
'Gainst Satan's couriers bound for their own clime.
The sun takes up some years for every ray
To reach its goal — the devil not half a day.

LVII.

Upon the verge of space, about the size
Of half-a-crown, a little speck appeared
(I've seen a something like it in the skies
In the Ægean, ere a squall); it neared,
And, growing bigger, took another guise;
Like an aërial ship it tacked, and steered,
Or *was* steered (I am doubtful of the grammar
Of the last phrase, which makes the stanza stammer;—

LVIII.

But take your choice); and then it grew a cloud;
And so it was — a cloud of witnesses.[181]
But such a cloud! No land e'er saw a crowd
Of locusts numerous as the heavens saw these;
They shadowed with their myriads space; their loud
And varied cries were like those of wild geese
(If nations may be likened to a goose),
And realised the phrase of "hell broke loose."

LIX.

Here crashed a sturdy oath of stout John Bull,
Who damned away his eyes as heretofore:
There Paddy brogued "By Jasus!" — "What's your wull?"
The temperate Scot exclaimed: the French ghost swore

In certain terms I sha'n't translate in full,
As the first coachman will; and 'midst the war,
The voice of Jonathan was heard to express,
"*Our* president is going to war, I guess."

LX.

Besides there were the Spaniard, Dutch, and Dane;
In short, an universal shoal of shades,
From Otaheite's isle to Salisbury Plain,
Of all climes and professions, years and trades,
Ready to swear against the good king's reign,
Bitter as clubs in cards are against spades:
All summoned by this grand "subpœna," to
Try if kings mayn't be damned like me or you.

LXI.

When Michael saw this host, he first grew pale,
As angels can; next, like Italian twilight,
He turned all colours — as a peacock's tail,
Or sunset streaming through a Gothic skylight
In some old abbey, or a trout not stale,
Or distant lightning on the horizon *by* night,
Or a fresh rainbow, or a grand review
Of thirty regiments in red, green, and blue.

LXII.

Then he addressed himself to Satan: "Why —
My good old friend, for such I deem you, though
Our different parties make us fight so shy,
I ne'er mistake you for a *personal* foe;

Our difference is *political*, and I
Trust that, whatever may occur below,
You know my great respect for you: and this
Makes me regret whate'er you do amiss —

LXIII.

"Why, my dear Lucifer, would you abuse
My call for witnesses? I did not mean
That you should half of earth and hell produce;
'Tis even superfluous, since two honest, clean,
True testimonies are enough: we lose
Our time, nay, our eternity, between
The accusation and defence: if we
Hear both, 'twill stretch our immortality."

LXIV.

Satan replied, "To me the matter is
Indifferent, in a personal point of view:
I can have fifty better souls than this
With far less trouble than we have gone through
Already; and I merely argued his
Late majesty of Britain's case with you
Upon a point of form: you may dispose
Of him; I've kings enough below, God knows!"

LXV.

Thus spoke the Demon [182] (late called "multifaced"
By multo-scribbling Southey). "Then we'll call
One or two persons of the myriads placed
Around our congress, and dispense with all

The rest," quoth Michael: "Who may be so graced
As to speak first? there's choice enough — who shall
It be?" Than Satan answered, "There are many;
But you may choose Jack Wilkes as well as any."

LXVI.

A merry, cock-eyed,[183] curious-looking sprite
Upon the instant started from the throng,
Dressed in a fashion now forgotten quite;
For all the fashions of the flesh stick long
By people in the next world; where unite
All the costumes since Adam's, right or wrong,
From Eve's fig-leaf down to the petticoat,
Almost as scanty, of days less remote.

LXVII.

The spirit looked around upon the crowds
Assembled, and exclaimed, "My friends of all
The spheres, we shall catch cold amongst these clouds;
So let's to business: why this general call?
If those are freeholders I see in shrouds,
And 'tis for an election that they bawl,
Behold a candidate with unturned coat!
Saint Peter, may I count upon your vote?"

LXVIII.

"Sir," replied Michael, "you mistake; these things
Are of a former life, and what we do

Above is more august; to judge of kings
Is the tribunal met: so now you know."
"Then I presume those gentlemen with wings,"
Said Wilkes, "are cherubs; and that soul below
Looks much like George the Third, but to my mind
A good deal older — Bless me! is he blind?"

LXIX.

"He is what you behold him, and his doom
Depends upon his deeds," the Angel said.
"If you have aught to arraign in him, the tomb
Gives license to the humblest beggar's head
To lift itself against the loftiest." — "Some,"
Said Wilkes, "don't wait to see them laid in lead,
For such a liberty — and I, for one,
Have told them what I thought beneath the sun."

LXX.

"*Above* the sun repeat, then, what thou hast
To urge against him," said the Archangel.
"Why,"
Replied the spirit, "since old scores are past,
Must I turn evidence? In faith, not I.
Besides, I beat him hollow at the last,
With all his Lords and Commons: in the sky
I don't like ripping up old stories, since
His conduct was but natural in a prince.

LXXI.

"Foolish, no doubt, and wicked, to oppress
A poor unlucky devil without a shilling;
But then I blame the man himself much less
Than Bute and Grafton, and shall be unwilling
To see him punished here for their excess,
Since they were both damned long ago, and still in
Their place below: for me, I have forgiven,
And vote his 'habeas corpus' into heaven."

LXXII.

"Wilkes," said the Devil, "I understand all this;
You turned to half a courtier ere you died,[184]
And seem to think it would not be amiss
To grow a whole one on the other side
Of Charon's ferry; you forget that *his*
Reign is concluded; whatsoe'er betide,
He won't be sovereign more: you've lost your labour,
For at the best he will but be your neighbour.

LXXIII.

"However, I knew what to think of it,
When I beheld you in your jesting way
Flitting and whispering round about the spit
Where Belial, upon duty for the day,
With Fox's lard was basting William Pitt,
His pupil; I knew what to think, I say:

That fellow even in hell breeds farther ills;
I'll have him *gagged* — 'twas one of his own bills.

LXXIV.

"Call Junius!"[185] From the crowd a shadow stalked,
And at the name there was a general squeeze,
So that the very ghosts no longer walked
In comfort, at their own aërial ease,
But were all rammed, and jammed (but to be balked,
As we shall see), and jostled hands and knees,
Like wind compressed and pent within a bladder,
Or like a human colic, which is sadder.

LXXV.

The shadow came — a tall, thin, gray-haired figure,
That looked as it had been a shade on earth;
Quick in its motions, with an air of vigour,
But nought to mark its breeding or its birth:
Now it waxed little, then again grew bigger,
With now an air of gloom, or savage mirth;
But as you gazed upon its features, they
Changed every instant — to *what*, none could say.

LXXVI.

The more intently the ghosts gazed, the less
Could they distinguish whose the features were
The Devil himself seemed puzzled even to guess;
They varied like a dream — now here, now there

And several people swore from out the press,
They knew him perfectly; and one could swear
He was his father: upon which another
Was sure he was his mother's cousin's brother:

LXXVII.

Another, that he was a duke, or knight,
An orator, a lawyer, or a priest,
A nabob, a man-midwife;[186] but the wight
Mysterious changed his countenance at least
As oft as they their minds: though in full sight
He stood, the puzzle only was increased;
The man was a phantasmagoria in
Himself — he was so volatile and thin.[187]

LXXVIII.

The moment that you had pronounced him *one*,
Presto! his face changed, and he was another;
And when that change was hardly well put on,
It varied, till I don't think his own mother
(If that he had a mother) would her son
Have known, he shifted so from one to t'other;
Till guessing from a treasure grew a task,
At this epistolary "Iron Mask."[188]

LXXIX.

For sometimes he like Cerberus would seem —
"Three gentlemen at once" (as sagely says
Good Mrs. Malaprop); then you might deem
That he was not even *one*; now many rays

Were flashing round him; and now a thick steam
Hid him from sight — like fogs on London days:
Now Burke, now Tooke, he grew to people's fancies,
And certes often like Sir Philip Francis.[189]

LXXX.

I've an hypothesis — 'tis quite my own;
I never let it out till now, for fear
Of doing people harm about the throne,
And injuring some minister or peer,
On whom the stigma might perhaps be blown:
It is — my gentle public, lend thine ear!
'Tis, that what Junius we are wont to call
Was *really*, *truly*, nobody at all.

LXXXI.

I don't see wherefore letters should not be
Written without hands, since we daily view
Them written without heads; and books, we see,
Are filled as well without the latter too:
And really till we fix on somebody
For certain sure to claim them as his due,
Their author, like the Niger's mouth, will bother
The world to say if *there* be mouth or author.

LXXXII.

"And who and what art thou?" the Archangel said.
"For *that* you may consult my title-page,"

Replied this mighty shadow of a shade:
"If I have kept my secret half an age,
I scarce shall tell it now." — "Canst thou upbraid,"
Continued Michael, "George Rex, or allege
Aught further?" Junius answered, "You had better
First ask him for *his* answer to my letter:

LXXXIII.

"My charges upon record will outlast
The brass of both his epitaph and tomb."
"Repent'st thou not," said Michael, "of some past
Exaggeration? something which may doom
Thyself if false, as him if true? Thou wast
Too bitter — is it not so? — in thy gloom
Of passion?" — "Passion!" cried the phantom dim,
"I loved my country, and I hated him.

LXXXIV.

"What I have written, I have written: let
The rest be on his head or mine!" So spoke
Old "Nominis Umbra;"[190] and while speaking yet,
Away he melted in celestial smoke.[191]
Then Satan said to Michael, "Don't forget
To call George Washington,[192] and John Horne Tooke,
And Franklin;" — but at this time there was heard
A cry for room, though not a phantom stirred.

LXXXV.

At length with jostling, elbowing, and the aid
Of cherubim appointed to that post,
The devil Asmodeus to the circle made
His way, and looked as if his journey cost
Some trouble. When his burden down he laid,
"What's this?" cried Michael; "why, 'tis not a ghost?"
"I know it," quoth the incubus; "but he
Shall be one, if you leave the affair to me.

LXXXVI.

"Confound the renegado! I have sprained
My left wing, he's so heavy; one would think
Some of his works about his neck were chained.
But to the point; while hovering o'er the brink
Of Skiddaw [193] (where as usual it still rained),
I saw a taper, far below me, wink,
And stooping, caught this fellow at a libel —
No less on history than the Holy Bible.

LXXXVII.

"The former is the devil's scripture, and
The latter yours, good Michael; so the affair
Belongs to all of us, you understand.
I snatched him up just as you see him there,
And brought him off for sentence out of hand:
I've scarcely been ten minutes in the air —

At least a quarter it can hardly be:
I dare say that his wife is still at tea."

LXXXVIII.

Here Satan said, "I know this man of old,
And have expected him for some time here;
A sillier fellow you will scarce behold,
Or more conceited in his petty sphere:
But surely it was not worth while to fold
Such trash below your wing, Asmodeus dear:
We had the poor wretch safe (without being bored
With carriage) coming of his own accord.

LXXXIX.

"But since he's here, let's see what he has done."
"Done!" cried Asmodeus, "he anticipates
The very business you are now upon,
And scribbles as if head clerk to the Fates.
Who knows to what his ribaldry may run,
When such an ass as this, like Balaam's, prates?"
"Let's hear," quoth Michael, "what he has to say;
You know we're bound to that in every way."

XC.

Now the bard, glad to get an audience, which
By no means often was his case below,
Began to cough, and hawk, and hem, and pitch
His voice into that awful note of woe
To all unhappy hearers within reach
Of poets when the tide of rhyme's in flow;

But stuck fast with his first hexameter,
Not one of all whose gouty feet would stir.

XCI.

But ere the spavined dactyls could be spurred
Into recitative, in great dismay
Both cherubim and seraphim were heard
To murmur loudly through their long array;
And Michael rose ere he could get a word
Of all his foundered verses under way,
And cried, "For God's sake stop, my friend! 'twere best —
Non Di, non homines — you know the rest." [194]

XCII.

A general bustle spread throughout the throng,
Which seemed to hold all verse in detestation;
The angels had of course enough of song
When upon service; and the generation
Of ghosts had heard too much in life, not long
Before, to profit by a new occasion;
The monarch, mute till then, exclaimed, "What! what! [195]
Pye [196] come again? No more — no more of that!"

XCIII.

The tumult grew; an universal cough
Convulsed the skies, as during a debate,
When Castlereagh has been up long enough
(Before he was first minister of state,

I mean — the *slaves hear now*); some cried "Off,
off!"
As at a farce; till, grown quite desperate,
The bard Saint Peter prayed to interpose
(Himself an author) only for his prose.

XCIV.

The varlet was not an ill-favoured knave;
A good deal like a vulture in the face,
With a hook nose and a hawk's eye, which gave
A smart and sharper-looking sort of grace
To his whole aspect, which, though rather grave,
Was by no means so ugly as his case;
But that indeed was hopeless as can be,
Quite a poetic felony "*de se*."

XCV.

Then Michael blew his trump, and stilled the noise
With one still greater, as is yet the mode
On earth besides; except some grumbling voice,
Which now and then will make a slight inroad
Upon decorous silence, few will twice
Lift up their lungs when fairly overcrowed;
And now the bard could plead his own bad cause,
With all the attitudes of self-applause.

XCVI.

He said — (I only give the heads) — he said,
He meant no harm in scribbling; twas his way

Upon all topics; 'twas, besides, his bread,
Of which he buttered both sides; 'twould delay
Too long the assembly (he was pleased to dread),
And take up rather more time than a day,
To name his works — he would but cite a few —
"Wat Tyler" — "Rhymes on Blenheim" — "Waterloo."

XCVII.

He had written praises of a regicide;
He had written praises of all kings whatever;
He had written for republics far and wide,
And then against them bitterer than ever:
For pantisocracy he once had cried
Aloud, a scheme less moral than 'twas clever;
Then grew a hearty anti-jacobin —
Had turned his coat — and would have turned his skin.

XCVIII.

He had sung against all battles, and again
In their high praise and glory; he had called
Reviewing[197] "the ungentle craft," and then
Become as base a critic as e'er crawled —
Fed, paid, and pampered by the very men
By whom his muse and morals had been mauled:
He had written much blank verse, and blanker prose,
And more of both than anybody knows.[198]

XCIX.

He had written Wesley's life: — here turning round
To Satan, "Sir, I'm ready to write yours,
In two octavo volumes, nicely bound,
With notes and preface, all that most allures
The pious purchaser; and there's no ground
For fear, for I can choose my own reviewers:
So let me have the proper documents,
That I may add you to my other saints."

C.

Satan bowed, and was silent. "Well, if you,
With amiable modesty, decline
My offer, what says Michael? There are few
Whose memoirs could be rendered more divine.
Mine is a pen of all work; not so new
As it was once, but I would make you shine
Like your own trumpet. By the way, my own
Has more of brass in it, and is as well blown.

CI.

"But talking about trumpets, here's my Vision!
Now you shall judge, all people; yes, you shall
Judge with my judgment, and by my decision
Be guided who shall enter heaven or fall.[199]
I settle all these things by intuition,
Times present, past, to come, heaven, hell, and all
Like King Alfonso.[200] When I thus see double,
I save the Deity some worlds of trouble."

CII.

He ceased, and drew forth an MS.; and no
  Persuasion on the part of devils, or saints,
Or angels, now could stop the torrent; so
  He read the first three lines of the contents;
But at the fourth, the whole spiritual show
  Had vanished, with variety of scents,
Ambrosial and sulphureous, as they sprang,
Like lightning, off from his "melodious twang."[201]

CIII.

Those grand heroics acted as a spell;
  The angels stopped their ears and plied their
    pinions;
The devils ran howling, deafened, down to hell;
  The ghosts fled, gibbering, for their own domin-
    ions —
(For 'tis not yet decided where they dwell,
  And I leave every man to his opinions);
Michael took refuge in his trump — but, lo!
His teeth were set on edge, he could not blow!

CIV.

Saint Peter, who has hitherto been known
  For an impetuous saint, upraised his keys,
And at the fifth line knocked the poet down;[202]
  Who fell like Phaeton, but more at ease,
Into his lake, for there he did not drown;
  A different web being by the Destinies

Woven for the Laureate's final wreathe, whene'er
Reform shall happen either here or there.

CV.

He first sank to the bottom — like his works,
But soon rose to the surface — like himself;
For all corrupted things are buoyed like corks,[203]
By their own rottenness, like as an elf,
Or wisp that flits o'er a morass: he lurks,
It may be, still, like dull books on a shelf,
In his own den, to scrawl some "Life" or "Vision,"[204]
As Welborn says — "the devil turned precisian."

CVI.

As for the rest, to come to the conclusion
Of this true dream, the telescope is gone
Which kept my optics free from all delusion,
And showed me what I in my turn have shown;
All I saw farther, in the last confusion,
Was, that King George slipped into heaven for one;
And when the tumult dwindled to a calm,
I left him practising the hundredth psalm.[205]

Appendix

Note A.

Mr. William Smith's Speech in the House of Commons, March 14, 1817.

The honourable member then adverted to that tergiversation of principle which the career of political individuals so often presented. He was far from supposing, that a man who set out in life with the profession of certain sentiments was bound to conclude life with them. He thought there might be many occasions in which a change of opinion, when that change was unattended by any personal advantages, when it appeared entirely disinterested, might be the result of sincere conviction. But what he most detested, what most filled him with disgust, was the settled, determined malignity of a renegado. He had read in a publication (*The Quarterly Review*), certainly entitled to much respect from its general literary excellences, though he differed from it in its principles, a passage alluding to the recent disturbances, which passage was as follows:

"When the man of free opinions commences professor of moral and political philosophy for the benefit of the public — the fables of old credulity are then verified — his very breath becomes venomous, and every page which he sends abroad carries with it poison to the unsuspicious reader. We have shown, on a former occasion, how men of this description are acting upon the public, and have explained in what manner a large part of the people have been prepared for the virus with which they inoculate them. The dangers arising from such a state of things are now fully apparent, and the designs of the

incendiaries, which have for some years been proclaimed so plainly that they ought, long ere this, to have been prevented, are now manifested by overt acts."

With the permission of the House, he would read an extract from a poem recently published, to which, he supposed, the above writer alluded (or at least to productions of a similar kind), as constituting a part of the virus with which the public mind had been infected:

> "My brethren, these are truths and weighty ones:
> Ye are all equal; nature made ye so.
> Equality is your birthright;—when I gaze
> On the proud palace, and behold one man,
> In the blood-purpled robes of royalty,
> Feasting at ease, and lording over millions;
> Then turn me to the hut of poverty,
> And see the wretched labourer, worn with toil,
> Divide his scanty morsel with his infants,
> I sicken, and, indignant at the sight,
> Blush for the patience of humanity."

He could read many other passages from these works equally strong on both sides; but, if they were written by the same person, he should like to know from the honourable and learned gentleman opposite why no proceedings had been instituted against the author. The poem "Wat Tyler" appeared to him to be the most seditious book that was ever written; its author did not stop short of exhorting to general anarchy; he vilified kings, priests, and nobles, and was for universal suffrage, and perfect equality. The Spencean plan could not be compared with it; that miserable and ridiculous performance did not attempt to employ any arguments; but the author of "Wat Tyler" constantly appealed to the passions, and in a style which the author, at that time, he supposed, conceived to be eloquence. Why, then, had not those who thought it necessary to suspend the Habeas Corpus act taken notice of this poem? Why had not they discovered the author of that seditious publication, and visited him with the penalties of the law? The work was not published secretly, it was not handed

about in the darkness of night, but openly and publicly sold in the face of day. It was at this time to be purchased at almost every bookseller's shop in London: it was now exposed for sale in a bookseller's shop in Pall Mall, who styled himself bookseller to one or two of the royal family. He borrowed the copy, from which he had just read the extract, from an honourable friend of his, who bought it in the usual way; and, therefore, he supposed there could be no difficulty in finding out the party that wrote it. He had heard, that when a man of the name of Winterbottom was some years ago confined in Newgate, the manuscript had been sent to him, with liberty to print it for his own advantage, if he thought proper; but that man, it appeared, did not like to risk the publication; and, therefore, it was now first issued into the world. It must remain with the government, and their legal advisers, to take what steps they might deem most advisable to repress this seditious work, and punish its author. In bringing it under the notice of the House, he had merely spoken in defence of his constituents, who had been most grossly calumniated; and he thought that what he had said would go very far to exculpate them. But he wished to take this bull by the horns.—See *Handsard's Parl. Debates*, vol. xxxvii. p. 1088.

Note B.

A LETTER TO WILLIAM SMITH, ESQ., M.P., BY ROBERT SOUTHEY.

Sir:—You are represented in the newspapers as having entered, during an important discussion in Parliament, into a comparison between certain passages in the *Quarterly Review*, and the opinions which were held by the author of "Wat Tyler," three and twenty years ago. It appears farther, according to the same authority, that the introduction of so strange a criticism, in so unfit a place, did not arise from the debate, but was a premeditated thing; that you had prepared yourself for it by stowing the *Quarterly Review* in one pocket, and "Wat Tyler" in the other; and that you deliberately stood up for the purpose of reviling an individual who was

not present to vindicate himself, and in a place which afforded you protection.

My name, indeed, was not mentioned; but that I was the person whom you intended, was notorious to all who heard you. For the impropriety of introducing such topics in such an assembly, it is farther stated, that you received a well-merited rebuke from Mr. Wynn, who spoke on that occasion as much from his feelings toward one with whom he has lived in uninterrupted friendship for nearly thirty years, as from a sense of the respect which is due to Parliament. It is, however, proper that I should speak explicitly for myself. This was not necessary in regard to Mr. Brougham,—he only carried the quarrels as well as the practices of the *Edinburgh Review* into the House of Commons. But as calumny, sir, has not been your vocation, it may be useful, even to yourself, if I comment upon your first attempt.

First, as to the *Quarterly Review*. You can have no other authority for ascribing any particular paper in that journal to one person or to another, than common report; in following which you may happen to be as much mistaken as I was when, upon the same grounds, I supposed Mr. William Smith to be a man of candour, incapable of grossly and wantonly insulting an individual.

The *Quarterly Review* stands upon its own merits. It is not answerable for anything more than it contains. What I may have said, or thought, in any part of my life, no more concerns that journal than it does you, or the House of Commons: and I am as little answerable for the journal, as the journal for me. What I may have written in it is a question which you, sir, have no right to ask, and which certainly I will not answer. As little right have you to take that for granted which you cannot possibly know. The question, as respects the *Quarterly Review*, is not who wrote the paper which happens to have excited Mr. William Smith's displeasure, but whether the facts which are there stated are true, the quotations accurate, and the inferences just: the reviewer, whoever he may be, may defy you to disprove them.

Secondly, as to "Wat Tyler." Now, sir, though you are not acquainted with the full history of this notable production, yet

you could not have been ignorant that the author whom you attacked at such unfair advantage was the aggrieved, and not the offending, person. You knew that this poem had been written very many years ago, in his early youth. You knew that a copy of it had been surreptitiously obtained, and made public by some skulking scoundrel who had found booksellers not more honourable than himself, to undertake the publication. You knew that it was published without the writer's knowledge, for the avowed purpose of insulting him, and with the hope of injuring him if possible. You knew that the transaction bore upon its face every character of baseness and malignity. You knew that it must have been effected either by robbery or by breach of trust. These things, Mr. William Smith, you knew! And, knowing them as you did, I verily believe, that if it were possible to revoke what is irrevocable, you would at this moment be far more desirous of blotting from remembrance the disgraceful speech which stands upon record in your name, than I should be of cancelling the boyish composition that gave occasion to it. "Wat Tyler" is full of errors, — but they are the errors of youth and ignorance; they bear no indication of an ungenerous spirit, or of a malevolent heart.

For the book itself, I deny that it is a seditious performance; for it places in the mouths of the personages who are introduced nothing more than a correct statement of their real principles. That it is a mischievous publication, I know, the errors which it contains being especially dangerous at this time. Therefore I came forward without hesitation to avow it, to claim it as my own property, which had never been alienated, and to suppress it. And I am desirous that my motives in thus acting should not be misunderstood. The piece was written under the influence of opinions which I have long since outgrown, and repeatedly disclaimed, but for which I have never affected to feel either shame or contrition: they were taken up conscientiously in early youth, they were acted upon in disregard of all worldly considerations, and they were left behind in the same straightforward course, as I advanced in years. It was written when republicanism was confined to a very small number of the educated classes; when those who

were known to entertain such opinions were exposed to personal danger from the populace; and when a spirit of Anti-jacobinism was predominant, which I cannot characterise more truly than by saying, that it was as unjust and as intolerant, though not quite as ferocious, as the Jacobinism of the present day. Had the poem been published during any quiet state of the public mind, the act of dishonesty in the publisher would have been the same; but I should have left it unnoticed, in full confidence that it would have been forgotten as speedily as it deserved. But in these times, it is incumbent upon me to come forward as I have done. It became me to disclaim whatever had been erroneous and intemperate in my former opinions, as frankly and as fearlessly as I once maintained them. And this I did, not as one who felt himself in any degree disgraced by the exposure of the crude and misdirected feelings of his youth (feelings right in themselves, and wrong only in their direction), but as one whom no considerations have ever deterred from doing what he believed to be his duty.

When, therefore, Mr. William Smith informed the House of Commons that the author of "Wat Tyler" thinks no longer upon certain points as he did in his youth, he informed that legislative assembly of nothing more than what the author has shown, during very many years, in the course of his writings; —that while events have been moving on upon the great theatre of human affairs, his intellect has not been stationary. But when the member for Norwich asserts (as he is said to have asserted) that I impute evil motives to men merely for holding now the same doctrine which I myself formerly professed, and when he charges me (as he is said to have charged me) with the malignity and baseness of a renegade, the assertion and the charge are as *false*, as the language in which they are conveyed is coarse and insulting.

Upon this subject I must be heard farther. The *Edinburgh Review* has spoken somewhere of those vindictive and jealous writings in which Mr. Southey has brought forward his claims to the approbation of the public. This is one of those passages for which the editor of that review has merited an abatement in heraldry; — no such writings ever have been written; — and, indeed, by other like assertions of equal veracity, the

gentleman has richly entitled himself to bear a *gore sinister tenné* in his escutcheon. Few authors have obtruded themselves upon the public in their individual character less than I have done. My books have been sent into the world with no other introduction than an explanatory preface as brief as possible, arrogating nothing, vindicating nothing: and then they have been left to their fate. None of the innumerable attacks which have been made upon them has ever called forth on my part a single word of reply, triumphantly as I might have exposed my assailants, not only for their ignorance and inconsistency, but frequently for that moral turpitude which is implied in wilful and deliberate misstatement. The unprovoked insults which have been levelled at me, both in prose and rhyme, never induced me to retaliate: it will not be supposed that the ability for satire was wanting, but, happily, I had long since subdued the disposition. I knew that men might be appreciated from the character of their enemies as well as of their friends, and I accepted the hatred of sciolists, coxcombs, and profligates, as one sure proof that I was deserving well of the wise and of the good.

It will not therefore be imputed to any habit of egotism, or any vain desire of interesting the public in my individual concerns, if I now come forward from that privacy, in which both from judgment and disposition it would have been my choice to have remained. While among the mountains of Cumberland I have been employed upon the mines of Brazil, the war in the Peninsula, and such other varieties of pursuit as serve to keep the intellect in health by alternately exercising and refreshing it, my name has served in London for the very shuttlecock of discussion. My celebrity has for a time eclipsed that of Mr. Hunt the Orator, and may perhaps have impeded the rising reputation of Toby, the Sapient Pig. I have reigned in the newspapers as paramount as Joanna Southcote during the last month of her tympany. Nay, columns have been devoted to Mr. Southey and "Wat Tyler" which would otherwise have been employed in bewailing the forlorn condition of the Emperor Napoleon, and reprobating the inhumanity of the British Cabinet for having designedly exposed him, like Bishop Hatto, to be devoured by the rats.

That I should ever be honoured by such a delicate investigation of my political opinions, was what I never could have anticipated, even in the wildest dreams of unfledged vanity. Honour, however, has been thrust upon me as upon Malvolio. The verses of a boy, of which he thought no more than of his school-exercises, and which, had they been published when they were written, would have passed without notice to the family vault, have not only been perused by the lord chancellor, in his judicial office, but have been twice produced in Parliament for the edification of the legislature. The appetite for slander must be sharp-set, when it can prey upon such small gear! As, however, the opinions of Mr. Southey have not been thought unworthy to occupy so considerable a share of attention, he need not apprehend the censure of the judicious if he takes part in the discussion himself, so far as briefly to inform the world what they really have been, and what they are.

In my youth, when my stock of knowledge consisted of such an acquaintance with Greek and Roman history as is acquired in the course of a regular scholastic education, when my heart was full of poetry and romance, and Lucan and Akenside were at my tongue's end, I fell into the political opinions which the French Revolution was then scattering throughout Europe; and, following those opinions with ardour wherever they led, I soon perceived that inequalities of rank were a light evil compared to the inequalities of property, and those more fearful distinctions which the want of moral and intellectual culture occasions between man and man. At that time, and with those opinions, or rather feelings (for their root was in the heart, and not in the understanding), I wrote "Wat Tyler," as one who was impatient of "all the oppressions that are done under the sun." The subject was injudiciously chosen, and it was treated as might be expected by a youth of twenty, in such times, who regarded only one side of the question. There is no other misrepresentation. The sentiments of the historical characters are correctly stated. Were I now to dramatise the same story there would be much to add, but little to alter. I should not express those sentiments less strongly, but I should oppose to them more enlarged views of

the nature of man and the progress of society. I should set forth with equal force the oppressions of the feudal system, the excesses of the insurgents, and the treachery of the government, and hold up the errors and crimes which were then committed, as a warning for this and for future ages. I should write as a man, not as a stripling; with the same heart, and same desires, but with a ripened understanding and competent stores of knowledge.

It is a fair and legitimate inference, that no person would have selected this subject, and treated it in such a manner at such a time, unless he had in a certain degree partaken of the sentiments which are expressed in it: in *what* degree he partook them is a question which it requires more temper as well as more discretion to resolve than you, sir, have given any proof of possessing. This can only be ascertained by comparing the piece with other works of the same author, written about the same time, or shortly afterwards, and under the influence of the same political opinions: by such a comparison it might be discerned what arose from his own feelings, and what from the nature of dramatic composition. But to select passages from a dramatic poem, and ascribe the whole force of the sentiments to the writer as if he himself held them, without the slightest qualification, is a mode of criticism manifestly absurd and unjust. Whether it proceeded in this instance from excess of malice, or deficiency of judgment, is a point which they who are best acquainted with Mr. William Smith may be able to determine.

It so happens that sufficient specimens of Mr. Southey's way of thinking in his youth are before the world, without breaking open escritoires, or stealing any more of his juvenile papers which he may have neglected to burn. The poem to which, with all its faults, he is indebted for his first favourable notice from the public, may possibly have been honoured with a place in Mr. William Smith's library, as it received the approbation of all the dissenting journals of the day. It is possible that their recommendation may have induced him to favour "Joan of Arc" with a perusal, and not improbably in a mood which would disregard its manifold demerits in style and structure, for the sake of its liberal opinions. Perhaps,

too, he may have condescended to notice the minor poems of the same author, sanctioned, as some of these also were, at their first appearance, by the same critical authorities. In these productions he may have seen expressed an enthusiastic love of liberty, — a detestation of tyranny, wherever it exists, and in whatever form, — an ardent abhorrence of all wicked ambition, — and a sympathy not less ardent with those who were engaged in war for the defence of their country, and in a righteous cause, — feelings just, as well as generous in themselves. He might have perceived also frequent indications, that in the opinion of the youthful writer a far happier system of society was possible than any under which mankind are at present existing, or ever have existed since the patriarchal ages, — and no equivocal aspirations after such a state. In all this he might have seen something that was erroneous, and more that was visionary; but nothing that savoured of intemperance or violence. I insist, therefore, that inasmuch as "Wat Tyler" may differ in character from these works, the difference arises necessarily from the nature of dramatic composition. I maintain that this is the inference which must be drawn by every honest and judicious mind, and I affirm that such an inference would be strictly conformable to the fact.

Do not, however, sir, suppose that I shall seek to shrink from a full avowal of what my opinions have been; neither before God nor man am I ashamed of them! I have as little cause for humiliation in recalling them, as Gibbon had, when he related how he had knelt at the feet of a confessor; for while I imbibed the republican opinions of the day, I escaped the atheism and the leprous immorality which generally accompanied them. I cannot therefore join with Beattie in blessing

> "... the hour when I escaped the wrangling crew,
> From Pyrrho's maze, and Epicurus' sty,"

for I was never lost in the one nor defiled in the other. My progress was of a different kind. From building castles in the air to framing commonwealths, was an easy transition: the next step was to realise the vision; and, in the hope of accomplishing this, I forsook the course of life for which I

had been designed, and the prospects of advancement which I may say without presumption were within my reach. My purpose was to retire with a few friends into the wilds of America, and there lay the foundations of a community, upon what we believed to be the political system of Christianity. It matters not in what manner the vision was dissolved. I am not now writing my own memoirs, and it is sufficient simply to state the fact. We were connected with no clubs, no societies, no party. The course which we would have pursued might have proved destructive to ourselves, but, as it related to all other persons, never did the aberrations of youth take a more innocent direction.

I know, sir, that you were not ignorant of this circumstance; the project, while it was in view, was much talked of among that sect of Christians to which you belong, and some of your friends are well acquainted with the events of my life. What, then, I may ask, did you *learn* concerning me from this late surreptitious publication? Nay, sir, the personal knowledge which you possessed was not needful for a full understanding of the political opinions which I entertained in youth. They are expressed in poems which have been frequently reprinted, and are continually on sale: no alterations have ever been made for the purpose of withdrawing, concealing, or extenuating them. I have merely affixed to every piece the date of the year in which it was written, — and the progress of years is sufficient to explain the change.

You, Mr. William Smith, may possibly be acquainted with other persons who were republicans in the first years of the French Revolution, and who have long since ceased to be so, with as little impeachment of their integrity as of their judgment: yet you bring it as a heinous charge against me, that having entertained enthusiastic notions in my youth, three and twenty years should have produced a change in the opinions of one whose life has been devoted to the acquirement of knowledge. You are pleased in your candour to admit that I might have been sincere when I was erroneous; and you, who are a professor of modern liberality, are not pleased to admit that the course of time and events may have corrected me in what was wrong, and confirmed me in what was right. True

it is that the events of the last five and twenty years have been lost upon you; perhaps you judge me by yourself; and you may think that this is a fair criterion; — but I must protest against being measured by any such standard. Between you and me, sir, there can be no sympathy, even though we should sometimes happen to think alike. We are as unlike in all things, as men of the same time, country, and rank in society can be imagined to be; and the difference is in our mind and mould as we came from the potter's hand.

And what, sir, is the change in the opinions of Mr. Southey which has drawn upon him the ponderous displeasure of Mr. William Smith? This was a point upon which it behoved you to be especially well-informed before you applied to him the false and insolent appellation which you are said to have used, and which I am authorised in believing that you have used. He has ceased to believe that old monarchical countries are capable of republican forms of government. He has ceased to think that he understood the principles of government, and the nature of man and society, before he was one and twenty years of age. He has ceased to suppose that men who neither cultivate their intellectual nor their moral faculties can understand them at any age. He has ceased to wish for revolutions even in countries where great alteration is to be desired, because he has seen that the end of anarchy is military despotism. But he has not ceased to love liberty with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his strength; he has not ceased to detest tyranny wherever it exists, and in whatever form. He has not ceased to abhor the wickedness of ambition, and to sympathise with those who were engaged in the defence of their country and in a righteous cause; — if indeed he had, he might have been sure of the approbation, not only of Mr. William Smith, and of those persons who were during the war the sober opponents of their country's cause, but of the whole crew of ultra Whigs and anarchists, from Messrs. Brougham and Clodius, down to Cobbett, Cethegus, and Co.

Many were the Englishmen who wished well to the French at the commencement of their revolution; but if any of these Englishmen have attached the same interest to the cause of

France through all the changes of the Revolution, — if they have hoped that Buonaparte might succeed in the usurpation of Portugal and Spain, and the subjugation of the Continent, — the change is in them, in their feelings and their principles, not in me and in mine. At no time of my life have I held any opinions like those of the Buonapartists and revolutionists of the present day; — never could I have held any communion with such men in thought, word, or deed, — my nature, God be thanked! would always have kept me from them instinctively, as it would from toad or asp. Look through the whole writings of my youth, including if you please "Wat Tyler;" there can be no danger that its errors should infect a gentleman who has called upon the attorney-general to prosecute the author, — and he would not be the worse were he to catch from it a little of the youthful generosity which it breathes. I ask you, sir, in which of those writings I have appealed to the base or the malignant feelings of mankind, — and I ask you whether the present race of revolutionary writers appeal to any other? What man's private character did I stab? Whom did I libel? Whom did I slander? Whom did I traduce? These miscreants live by calumny and sedition; they are libellers and liars by trade.

The one object to which I have ever been desirous of contributing according to my power, is the removal of those obstacles by which the improvement of mankind is impeded; and to this the whole tenor of my writings, whether in prose or verse, bears witness. This has been the pole star of my course; the needle has shifted according to the movements of the state-vessel wherein I am embarked, but the direction to which it points has always been the same. I did not fall into the error of those who, having been the friends of France when they imagined that the cause of liberty was implicated in her success, transferred their attachment from the republic to the military tyranny in which it ended, and regarded with complacency the progress of oppression because France was the oppressor. "They had turned their faces toward the east in the morning to worship the rising sun, and in the evening they were looking eastward still, obstinately affirming that still the sun was there." [206] I, on the contrary, altered my position as

the world went round. For so doing, Mr. William Smith is said to have insulted me with the appellation of RENEGADE; and if it be indeed true that the foul aspersion passed his lips, I brand him for it on the forehead with the name of SLANDERER! Salve the mark as you will, sir, it is ineffaceable! You must bear it with you to your grave, and the remembrance of it will outlast your epitaph.

And now, sir, learn what are the opinions of the man to whom you have offered this public and notorious wrong, — opinions not derived from any contagion of the times, nor entertained with the unreflecting eagerness of youth, nor adopted in connection with any party in the state; but gathered patiently, during many years of leisure and retirement, from books, observation, meditation, and intercourse with living minds who will be the light of other ages.

Greater changes in the condition of this country have been wrought during the last half century than an equal course of years had ever before produced. Without entering into the proofs of this proposition, suffice it to indicate, as among the most efficient causes, the steam and the spinning engines, the mail-coach, and the free publication of the debates in Parliament: hence have followed, in natural and necessary consequence, increased activity, enterprise, wealth, and power; but, on the other hand, greediness of gain, looseness of principle, half-knowledge (more perilous than ignorance), vice, poverty, wretchedness, disaffection, and political insecurity. The changes which have taken place render other changes inevitable; forward we must go; for it is not possible to retrace our steps; the hand of the political horologe cannot go back, like the shadow upon Hezekiah's dial; — when the hour comes, it must strike.

Slavery has long ceased to be tolerable in Europe: the remains of feudal oppression are disappearing even in those countries which have improved the least: nor can it be much longer endured that the extremes of ignorance, wretchedness, and brutality should exist in the very centre of civilised society. There can be no safety with a populace half Luddite, half Lazzaroni. Let us not deceive ourselves. We are far from that state in which anything resembling equality would be possible; but we are arrived at that state in which the extremes

of inequality are become intolerable. They are too dangerous, as well as too monstrous, to be borne much longer. Plans which would have led to the utmost horrors of insurrection have been prevented by the government, and by the enactment of strong but necessary laws. Let it not, however, be supposed that the disease is healed, because the ulcer may skin over. The remedies by which the body politic can be restored to health must be slow in their operation. The condition of the populace, physical, moral, and intellectual, must be improved, or a *Jacquerie*, a *Bellum Servile*, sooner or later will be the result. It is the people at this time who stand in need of reformation, not the government.

The government must better the condition of the populace; and the first thing necessary is to prevent it from being worsened. It must no longer suffer itself to be menaced, its chief magistrate insulted, and its most sacred institutions vilified with impunity. It must curb the seditious press, and keep it curbed. For this purpose, if the laws are not at present effectual, they should be made so; nor will they then avail unless they are vigilantly executed. I say this, well knowing to what obloquy it will expose me, and how grossly and impudently my meaning will be misrepresented; but I say it, because if the licentiousness of the press be not curbed, its abuse will most assuredly one day occasion the loss of its freedom.

This is the first and most indispensable measure; for without this all others will be fruitless. Next in urgency is the immediate relief of the poor. I differ, *toto cœlo*, from Mr. Owen, of Lanark, in one main point. To build upon any other foundation than religion is building upon sand. But I admire his practical benevolence, — I love his enthusiasm, — and I go far with him in his earthly views. What he has actually done entitles him to the greatest attention and respect. I sincerely wish that his plan for the extirpation of pauperism should be fairly tried. To employ the poor in manufactures is only shifting the evil, and throwing others out of employ, by bringing more labour, and more produce of labour, into a market which is already overstocked.

Wise and extensive plans of foreign colonisation contribute essentially to keep a state like England in health; but we must

not overlook the greater facility of colonising at home. Would it not be desirable that tracts of waste land should be purchased with public money, to be held as national domains, and colonised with our disbanded soldiers and sailors, and people who are in want of employment, dividing them into estates of different sizes according to the capability of the speculators, and allotting to every cottage that should be erected there a certain proportion of ground? Thus should we make immediate provision for those brave men whose services are no longer required for the defence of their country; thus should we administer immediate relief to the poor, lighten the poor-rates, give occupation to various branches of manufacture, and provide a permanent source of revenue, accruing from the increased prosperity of the country. There never was a time when every rood of ground maintained its man; but surely it is allowable to hope that whole districts will not always be suffered to lie waste while multitudes are in want of employment and of bread.

A duty scarcely less urgent than that of diminishing the burthen of the poor-rates, is that of providing for the education of the lower classes. Government must no longer, in neglect of its first and paramount duty, allow them to grow up in worse than heathen ignorance. They must be trained in the way they should go: they must be taught to "fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." Mere reading and writing will not do this: they must be instructed according to the established religion; they must be fed with the milk of sound doctrine: for states are secure in proportion as the great body of the people are attached to the institutions of their country. A moral and religious education will induce habits of industry; the people will know their duty, and find their interest and their happiness in following it. Give us the great boon of parochial education, so connected with the Church as to form part of the Establishment, and we shall find it a bulwark to the state as well as to the Church. Let this be done, let saving-banks be generally introduced, let new channels for industry be opened (as soon as the necessities of the state will permit) by a liberal expenditure in public works, by colonising our waste lands at home and

regularly sending off our swarms abroad, and the strength, wealth, and security of the nation will be in proportion to its numbers.

Never, indeed, was there a more senseless cry than that which is at this time raised for retrenchment in the public expenditure as a means of alleviating the present distress. That distress arises from a great and sudden diminution of employment, occasioned by many coinciding causes, the chief of which is that the war-expenditure of from forty to fifty millions yearly has ceased. Men are out of employ: the evil is that too little is spent, — and as a remedy, we are exhorted to spend less! Everywhere there are mouths crying out for food because the hands want work; and at this time, and for this reason, the state quack requires further reduction! Because so many hands are unemployed, he calls upon government to throw more upon the public by reducing its establishments and suspending its works! *O lepidum caput!* And it is by such heads as this that we are to be reformed!

"Statesmen," says Mr. Burke, "before they value themselves on the relief given to the people by the destruction (or diminution) of their revenue, ought first to have carefully attended to the solution of this problem; whether it be more advantageous to the people to pay considerably, and to gain in proportion; or to gain little or nothing, and to be disburthened of all contribution." And in another place this great statesman says, "The prosperity and improvement of nations has generally increased with the increase of their revenues; and they will both continue to grow and flourish, as long as the balance between what is left to strengthen the efforts of individuals, and what is collected for the common efforts of the state, bear to each other a due reciprocal proportion and are kept in a close correspondence and communication." This opinion is strikingly corroborated by the unexampled prosperity which the country enjoyed during the war, — a war of unexampled expenditure: and the stupendous works of antiquity, the ruins of which at this day so mournfully attest the opulence and splendour of states which have long since ceased to exist, were in no slight degree the causes of that prosperity of which they are the proofs. Instead therefore of this senseless cry

for retrenchment, which is like prescribing depletion for a patient whose complaints proceed from inanition, a liberal expenditure should be advised in works of public utility and magnificence. For if experience has shown us that increased expenditure during war, and a proportionately increasing prosperity, have been naturally connected as cause and consequence, it is neither rash nor illogical to infer that a liberal expenditure in peace upon national works would produce the same beneficial effect, without any of the accompanying evil. Money thus expended will flow like chyle into the veins of the state, and nourish and invigorate it. Build, therefore, our monuments for Trafalgar and Waterloo, and let no paltry considerations prevent them from being made worthy of the occasion and of the country; of the men who have fought, conquered, and died for us; of Nelson, of Wellington, and of Great Britain. Let them be such as correspond in splendour with the actions to which they are consecrated, and vie, if possible, in duration, with the memory of those immortal events. They are for after-ages; the more magnificent they may be, the better will they manifest the national sense of great public services, and the more will they excite and foster that feeling in which great actions have their root. In proportion to their magnificence, also, will be the present benefit, as well as the future good; for they are not, like the Egyptian pyramids, to be raised by bondsmen under rigorous taskmasters: the wealth which is taken from the people returns to them again, like vapours which are drawn imperceptibly from the earth, but distributed to it in refreshing dews and fertilising showers. What bounds could imagination set to the welfare and glory of this island, if a tenth part, or even a twentieth of what the war expenditure has been, were annually applied in improving and creating harbours, in bringing our roads to the best possible state, in colonising upon our waste lands, in reclaiming fens and conquering tracts from the sea, in encouraging the liberal arts, in erecting churches, in building and endowing schools and colleges, and making war upon physical and moral evil with the whole artillery of wisdom and righteousness, with all the resources of science, and all the ardour of enlightened and enlarged benevolence?

It is likewise incumbent upon government to take heed lest, in its solicitude for raising the necessary revenue, there should be too little regard for the means by which it is raised. It should beware of imposing such duties as create a strong temptation to evade them. It should be careful that all its measures tend, as much as possible, to the improvement of the people, and especially careful that nothing be done which can tend in any way to corrupt them. It should reform its prisons; and apply some remedy to the worst grievance which exists, — the enormous expenses, the chicanery, and the ruinous delays of the law.

Machiavelli says that legislators ought to suppose all men to be naturally bad; in no point has that sagacious statesman been more erroneous. Fitter it is that governments should think well of mankind; for the better they think of them, the better they will find them, and the better they will make them. Government must reform the populace, the people must reform themselves. This is the true reform, and compared with this all else is *flocci*, *nauci*, *nihili*, *pili*.

Such, sir, are in part the views of the man whom you have traduced. Had you perused his writings, you could not have mistaken them; and I am willing to believe that if you had done this, and formed an opinion for yourself, instead of retailing that of wretches who are at once the panders of malice and the pioneers of rebellion, you would neither have been so far forgetful of your parliamentary character, nor of the decencies between man and man, as so wantonly, so unjustly, and in such a place, to have attacked one who had given you no provocation.

Did you imagine that I should sit down quietly under the wrong, and treat your attack with the same silent contempt as I have done all the abuse and calumny with which, from one party or the other, Anti-jacobins or Jacobins, I have been assailed in daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly publications since the year 1796, when I first became known to the public? The place where you made the attack, and the manner of the attack, prevent this.

How far the writings of Mr. Southey may be found to deserve a favourable acceptance from after-ages, time will

decide; but a name, which, whether worthily or not, has been conspicuous in the literary history of its age, will certainly not perish. Some account of his life will always be prefixed to his works, and transferred to literary histories, and to the biographical dictionaries, not only of this, but of other countries. There it will be related that he lived in the bosom of his family, in absolute retirement; that in all his writings there breathed the same abhorrence of oppression and immorality, the same spirit of devotion, and the same ardent wishes for the melioration of mankind; and that the only charge which malice could bring against him was, that as he grew older, his opinions altered concerning the means by which that melioration was to be effected; and that as he learned to understand the institutions of his country, he learned to appreciate them rightly, to love, and to revere, and to defend them. It will be said of him, that in an age of personality, he abstained from satire; and that during the course of his literary life, often as he was assailed, the only occasion on which he ever condescended to reply, was, when a certain Mr. William Smith insulted him in Parliament with the appellation of renegade. On that occasion, it will be said, that he vindicated himself, as it became him to do, and treated his calumniator with just and memorable severity. Whether it shall be added that Mr. William Smith redeemed his own character, by coming forward with honest manliness and acknowledging that he had spoken rashly and unjustly, concerns himself, but is not of the slightest importance to me.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

Occasional Pieces

Occasional Pieces

STANZAS.[207]

["COULD LOVE FOR EVER."]

I.

COULD Love for ever
Run like a river,
And Time's endeavour
Be tried in vain —
No other pleasure
With this could measure;
And like a treasure
We'd hug the chain.
But since our sighing
Ends not in dying,
And, formed for flying,
Love plumes his wing;
Then for this reason
Let's love a season;
But let that season be only Spring

II.

When lovers parted
Feel broken-hearted,

And, all hopes thwarted,
Expect to die;
A few years older,
Ah! how much colder
They might behold her
For whom they sigh!
When linked together,
In every weather,
They pluck Love's feather
From out his wing —
He'll stay for ever,
But sadly shiver
Without his plumage, when past the Spring.[208]

III.

Like Chiefs of Faction,
His life is action —
A formal paction
That curbs his reign,
Obscures his glory,
Despot no more, he
Such territory
Quits with disdain.
Still, still advancing,
With banners glancing,
His power enhancing,
He must move on —
Repose but cloys him,
Retreat destroys him,
Love brooks not a degraded throne.

IV.

Wait not, fond lover!
Till years are over,
And then recover,
  As from a dream.
While each bewailing
The other's failing,
With wrath and railing,
  All hideous seem —
While first decreasing,
Yet not quite ceasing,
Wait not till teasing
  All passion blight:
If once diminished
Love's reign is finished —
Then part in friendship, — and bid good-night.[209]

V.

So shall Affection
To recollection
The dear connection
  Bring back with joy:
You had not waited
Till, tired or hated,
Your passions sated
  Began to cloy.
Your last embraces
Leave no cold traces —
The same fond faces

As through the past;
And eyes, the mirrors
Of your sweet errors,
Reflect but rapture — not least though last.

VI.

True, separations
Ask more than patience;
What desperations
From such have risen!
But yet remaining,
What is't but chaining
Hearts which, once waning,
Beat 'gainst their prison?
Time can but cloy love,
And use destroy love:
The winged boy, Love,
Is but for boys —
You'll find it torture
Though sharper, shorter,
To wean, and not wear out your joys.

THE CHARITY BALL.

What matter the pangs of a husband and father,
If his sorrows in exile be great or be small,
So the Pharisee's glories around her she gather,
And the saint patronises her "charity ball!"
What matters — a heart which, though faulty, was feeling,
Be driven to excesses which once could appal —

That the sinner should suffer is only fair dealing,
As the saint keeps her charity back for "the ball!" [210]

EPIGRAM ON MY WEDDING-DAY.

TO PENELOPE.

THIS day, of all our days, has done
The worst for me and you:—
'Tis just *six* years since we were *one*,
And *five* since we were *two*.

January 2, 1821.

ON MY THIRTY-THIRD BIRTH-DAY.

JANUARY 22, 1821.[211]

THROUGH life's dull road, so dim and dirty,
I have dragged to three and thirty.
What have these years left to me?
Nothing — except thirty-three.

EPIGRAM.

ON THE BRASIERS' COMPANY HAVING RESOLVED TO PRESENT AN ADDRESS TO QUEEN CAROLINE.[212]

THE brasiers, it seems, are preparing to pass
An address, and present it themselves all in brass;—
A superfluous pageant — for, by the Lord Harry!
They'll find where they're going much more than they carry.[213]

TO MR. MURRAY.

For Orford[214] and for Waldegrave[215]
You give much more than me you gave;
Which is not fairly to behave,
My Murray.

Because if a live dog, 'tis said,
Be worth a lion fairly sped,
A *live lord* must be worth *two* dead,
My Murray.

And if, as the opinion goes,
Verse hath a better sale than prose —
Certes, I should have more than those,
My Murray.

But now this sheet is nearly crammed,
So, if *you will*, *I* sha'n't be shammed,
And if you *wont*, *you* may be damned,
My Murray.[216]

Notes

Notes

1. Francesca, daughter of Guido da Polenta, Lord of Ravenna and of Cervia, was given by her father in marriage to Lanciotto, son of Malatesta, Lord of Rimini, a man of extraordinary courage, but deformed in his person. His brother Paolo, who unhappily possessed those graces which the husband of Francesca wanted, engaged her affections; and being taken in adultery, they were both put to death by the enraged Lanciotto. The interest of this pathetic narrative is much increased when it is recollected that the father of this unfortunate lady was the beloved friend and generous protector of Dante during his latter days. See Canto xxvii. of the "Inferno," where Dante, speaking of Ravenna, says:

"L' aquila da Polenta là si cova,
Sì che Cervia ricopre co' suoi vanni.

". . . There Polenta's eagle broods,
And in his broad circumference of plume
O'ershadows Cervia. — *Cary.*

Guido was the son of Ostasio da Polenta, and made himself master of Ravenna in 1265. In 1322 he was deprived of his sovereignty, and died at Bologna in the year following. He is enumerated, by Tiraboschi, among the poets of his time.

2. The whole history of woman's love is highly and completely wrought, we think, in these few lines, as that of Juliet in the whole tragedy of Shakespeare. Francesca imputes the passion her brother-in-law conceived for her, not to depravity,

but nobleness of heart in him, and to her own loveliness. With a mingled feeling of keen sorrow and complacent naïveté, she says she was fair, and that an ignominious death robbed him of her beauty. She confesses that she loved, because she was beloved — that charm had deluded her; and she declares, with transport, that joy had not abandoned her even in hell, —

"... piacer sì forte,
Che, come vedi, ancor non m' abbandona."

It is thus that Dante unites perspicuity with conciseness, and the most naked simplicity with the profoundest observation of the heart. Her guilty passion survives its punishment by Heaven, — but without a shade of impiety. How striking is the contrast of her extreme happiness in the midst of torments that can never cease; when, resuming her narrative, she looks at her lover, and repeats with enthusiasm, —

"Questi, che mai da me non fia diviso," —

she nevertheless goes on to relieve her brother-in-law from all imputation of having seduced her. Alone, and unconscious of their danger, they read a love story together. They gazed upon each other, pale with emotion; but the secret of their mutual passion never escaped their lips:

"Per più fiate gli occhi ci sospinse
Quella lettura, e scolorocci il viso;
Ma solo un punto fu qual che ci vinse."

The description of two happy lovers in the story was the ruin of Francesca. It was the romance of Lancilot and Genevra, wife of Arthur, King of England:

"Quando leggemmo il disiato riso
Esser baciato da cotanto amante,
Questi, che mai da me non fia diviso
La bocca mi baciò tutto tremante."

After this avowal she hastens to complete the picture with one touch which covers her with confusion:

"Quel giorno più non vi leggemmo avante."

She utters not another word! — and yet we fancy her before us, with her downcast and glowing looks; whilst her lover stands by her side, listening in silence and in tears. Dante, too, who had hitherto questioned her, no longer ventures to inquire in what manner her husband had put her to death; but is so overawed by pity that he sinks into a swoon. Nor is this to be considered as merely a poetical exaggeration. The poet had probably known her when a girl, blooming in innocence and beauty under the paternal roof. This, we think, is the true account of the overwhelming sympathy with which her form overpowers him. The episode, too, was written by him in the very house in which she was born, and in which he had himself, during the last ten years of his exile, found a constant asylum.[1] — *Macaulay.*

3. Ravenna.

4. From Cain, the first fratricide. By Cainà we are to understand that part of the Inferno to which murderers are condemned.

5. "In omni adversitate fortunæ infelicissimum genus infortunii est fuisse felicem." — *Boetius.* Dante himself tells us, that Boetius and Cicero de Amicitiâ were the two first books that engaged his attention.

6. In some of the editions it is "dirò," in others "faro;" — an essential difference between "saying" and "doing," which I know not how to decide. Ask Foscolo. The d——d editions drive me mad. — *Lord B. to Mr. M.*

7. One of the knights of Arthur's Round Table, and the lover of Genevra, celebrated in romance. See Southey's "King Arthur," vol. i. p. 52. Whitaker, the historian of Manchester, makes out for the knight both a local habitation and a name. "The name of Lancelot," he says, "is an ap-

[1] I pass each day where Dante's bones are laid;
A little cupola, more neat than solemn,
Protects his dust, — but reverence here is paid
To the bard's tomb, and not the warrior's column:
The time must come when, both alike decayed,
The chieftain's trophy, and the poet's volume,
Will sink where lie the songs and wars of earth,
Before Pelides' death, or Homer's birth.
— *Don Juan*, C. iii.

pellation truly British, and significative of royalty ; Lance being a Celtic term for a spear, and Leod, Lod, or Lot, importing a people. He was *therefore* (!) a British sovereign ; and since he is denominated Lancelot of the Lake, perhaps (!) he resided at Coccium, in the region Linnis, and was the monarch of Lancashire ; as the kings of Creones, living at Selma, on the forest of Morven, are generally denominated sovereigns of Morven ; or, more properly, was King of Cheshire, and resided at Pool-ton Lancelot, in the hundred of Wirrall." See also Ellis's "Specimens of Early Romances," vol. i. p. 271.

8. The episode of Francesca of Rimini is thus translated by Cary : and it is only justice to Lord Byron to give the passage here, in order to show how he succeeded in overcoming all the difficulties of rhyme, with which Mr. Cary does not grapple :

"'The land that gave me birth
Is situate on the coast, where Po descends
To rest in ocean with his sequent streams.
Love, that in gentle heart is quickly learnt,
Entangled him by that fair form, from me
Ta'en in such cruel sort, as grieves me still :
Love, that denial takes from none beloved,
Caught me with pleasing him so passing well,
That, as thou seest, he yet deserts me not.
Love brought us to one death : Caina waits
The soul, who spilt our life.' Such were their words ;
At hearing which downward I bent my looks,
And held them there so long, that the Bard cried :
'What art thou pondering ?' I in answer thus :
'Alas ! by what sweet thoughts, what fond desire,
Must they at length to that ill pass have reached !'
Then turning, I to them my speech addressed,
And thus began : 'Francesca ! your sad fate
Even to tears my grief and pity moves.
But tell me ; in the time of your sweet sighs,
By what, and how Love granted, that ye knew
Your yet uncertain wishes ?' She replied :
'No greater grief than to remember days

Of joy, when misery is at hand. That kens
Thy learned instructor. Yet so eagerly
If thou art bent to know the primal root
From whence our love gat being, I will do
As one, who weeps and tells his tale. One day,
For our delight, we read of Lancelot,
How him love thralled. Alone we were, and no
Suspicion near us. Ofttimes by that reading
Our eyes were drawn together, and the hue
Fled from our altered cheek. But at one point
Alone we fell. When of that smile we read,
The wished smile, so rapturously kissed
By one so deep in love, then he, who ne'er
From me shall separate, at once my lips
All trembling kissed. The book and writer both
Were love's purveyors. In its leaves that day
We read no more.' While thus one spirit spake,
The other wailed so sorely, that heart-struck,
I, through compassion fainting, seemed not far
From death, and like a corse fell to the ground."

9. MS. — "Is to { recall to mind / remind us of } our happy days."

10. MS. — "In misery and { this / that } thy teacher knows."

11. MS. — "I will { relate / do even } as he weeps and says."

12. MS. — "But one point only us { overthrew / o'erthrew }."

13. MS. — "To be thus kissed by such { a fervent / devoted } lover."

14. The story of Francesca and Paolo is a great favourite with the Italians. It is noticed by all the historians of Ravenna. Petrarch introduces it, in his Trionfi d'Amore, among his examples of calamitous passion; and Tassoni, in his Secchia Rapita, represents Paolo Malatesta as leading the troops of Rimini, and describes him, when mounted on his charger,

as contemplating a golden sword-chain, presented to him by Francesca:

"Rimini vien con la bandiera sesta,
Guida mille cavalli, e mille fanti . . .
Halli donata al dispartir Francesca
L' aurea catena, à cui la spada appende.
La vì mirando al misero, e rinfresca
Quel foco ognor, che l' anima gli accende,
Quanto cerca fuggir, tanto s' invesca."

"To him Francesca gave the golden chain
At parting-time, from which his sword was hung;
The wretched lover gazed at it with pain,
Adding new pangs to those his heart had wrung;
The more he sought to fly the luscious bane,
The firmer he was bound, the deeper stung."

15. Ravenna — a city to which Lord Byron afterward declared himself more attached than to any other place, except Greece. He resided in it rather more than two years, "and quitted it," says Madame Guiccioli, "with the deepest regret, and with a presentiment that his departure would be the forerunner of a thousand evils: he was continually performing generous actions; many families owed to him the few prosperous days they ever enjoyed; his arrival was spoken of as a piece of public good fortune, and his departure as a public calamity."

16. I composed these stanzas (except the fourth, added now) a few days ago, on the road from Florence to Pisa. — *B. Diary*, Pisa, 6th Nov., 1821.

17. In the same diary, we find the following painfully interesting passage: "As far as Fame goes (that is to say, living Fame), I have had my share, perhaps — indeed, *certainly* — more than my deserts. Some odd instances have occurred to my own experience of the wild and strange places to which a name may penetrate, and where it may impress. Two years ago (almost three, being in August, or July, 1819) I received at Ravenna a letter in *English* verse from Drontheim in Norway, written by a Norwegian, and full of the usual compli-

ments, etc. In the same month I received an invitation into *Holstein*, from a Mr. Jacobson, I think, of Hamburgh; also (by the same medium) a translation of Medora's song in the 'Corsair,' by a Westphalian baroness (*not* 'Thunderton-tronck'), with some original verses of hers (very pretty and Klopstockish), and a prose translation annexed to them, on the subject of my wife. As they concerned her more than me, I sent them to her with Mr. Jacobson's letter. It was odd enough to receive an invitation to pass the *summer* in Holstein, while in Italy, from people I never knew. The letter was addressed to Venice. Mr. J. talked to me of the 'wild roses growing in the Holstein summer:' why, then, did the Cimbri and the Teutones emigrate? — What a strange thing is life and man! Were I to present myself at the door of the house where my daughter now is, the door would be shut in my face, unless (as is not impossible) I knocked down the porter; and if I had gone in that year (and perhaps now) to Drontheim (the furthest town in Norway) or into Holstein, I should have been received with open arms into the mansions of strangers and foreigners, — attached to me by no tie but that of mind and rumour. As far as *Fame* goes, I have had my share: it has indeed, been leavened by other human contingencies; and this in a greater degree than has occurred to most literary men of a decent rank in life; but, on the whole, I take it that such equipoise is the condition of humanity."

18. This trifle, which Lord Byron has himself designated as "a mere buffoonery, never meant for publication," was written in 1820, and first appeared in *The Liberal.* The personal allusions in which it abounds are, for the most part, sufficiently intelligible; and, with a few exceptions, so good-humoured, that the parties concerned may be expected to join in the laugh.

19. About the year 1781, it was much the fashion for several ladies to have evening assemblies, where the fair sex might participate in conversation with literary and ingenious men, animated by a desire to please. These societies were denominated *Blue-stocking Clubs;* the origin of which title being little known, it may be worth while to relate it. One of the most eminent members of those societies, when they

first commenced, was Mr. Stillingfleet, whose dress was remarkably grave, and in particular it was observed that he wore blue stockings. Such was the excellence of his conversation, that his absence was felt as so great a loss that it used to be said, "We can do nothing without the *blue stockings;*" and thus by degrees the title was established. — *Croker's Boswell.* Sir William Forbes, in his "Life of Doctor Beattie," says that "a foreigner of distinction, hearing the expression, translated it literally '*Bas Bleu*,' by which these meetings came to be distinguished. Miss Hannah More, who was herself a member, has written a poem with the title of 'Bas Bleu,' in allusion to this mistake of the foreigner, in which she has characterised most of the eminent personages of which it was composed."

20. See the stanzas on Messrs. Wordsworth and Southey in "Don Juan."

21. Paternoster-row — long and still celebrated as a very bazaar of booksellers. Sir Walter Scott "hitches into rhyme" one of the most important firms, — that

> "Of Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown,
> Our fathers of the Row."

22. This cant phrase was first used in the *Edinburgh Review* — probably by Mr. Jeffrey.

23. Her favourite science was the mathematical
— In short, she was a walking calculation,
Miss Edgeworth's novels stepping from their covers,
Morality's prim personification ——
But — oh! ye lords of ladies intellectual,
Inform us truly, have they not henpecked you all?
— *Don Juan*, Canto i.

24. Messrs. Southey and Sotheby.

25. "My Grandmother's Review, the British." This heavy journal has since been gathered to its grandmothers.

26. The "Journal de Trevoux" (in fifty-six volumes) is one of the most curious collections of literary gossip in the world, — and the poet paid the *British Review* an extravagant compliment when he made this comparison.

27. Sotheby is a good man — rhymes well (if not wisely); but is a bore. He seizes you by the button. One night of a rout at Mrs. Hope's he had fastened upon me — (something about Agamemnon, or Orestes, or some of his plays) notwithstanding my symptoms of manifest distress — for I was in love, and just nicked a minute when neither mothers, nor husbands, nor rivals, nor gossips were near my then idol, who was beautiful as the statues of the gallery where we stood at the time. Sotheby, I say, had seized upon me by the button and the heart-strings, and spared neither. William Spencer, who likes fun, and don't dislike mischief, saw my case, and coming up to us both, took me by the hand, and pathetically bade me farewell; "for," said he, "I see it is all over with you." Sotheby then went away: "*sic me servavit Apollo.*" — *B. Diary*, 1821.

28. Mr. Wordsworth is collector of stamps for Cumberland and Westmoreland.

29. Grange is or was a famous pastry-cook and fruiterer in Piccadilly.

30. When I belonged to the Drury Lane Committee, the number of plays upon the shelves were about five hundred. Mr. Sotheby obligingly offered us ALL his tragedies, and I pledged myself, and — notwithstanding many squabbles with my committee brethren — did get "Ivan" accepted, read, and the parts distributed. But lo! in the very heart of the matter, upon some *tepid*-ness on the part of Kean, or warmth on that of the author, Sotheby withdrew his play. — *B. Diary*, 1811.

31. The late Sir George Beaumont — a constant friend of Mr. Wordsworth.

32. It was not the present Earl of Lonsdale; but James, the first earl, who offered to build, and completely furnish and man, a ship of seventy-four guns, toward the close of the American war, for the service of his country, at his own expense; — hence the *soubriquet* in the text.

33. "Pedlers," and "boats," and "waggons!" Oh! ye shades
Of Pope and Dryden, are we come to this?

That trash of such sort not alone evades
Contempt, but from the bathos' vast abyss
Floats scumlike uppermost, and these Jack Cades
Of sense and song above your graves may hiss —
The "little boatman!" and his "Peter Bell"
Can sneer at him who drew "Achitophel!"
— *Don Juan*, Canto iii.

34. Fact from life, with the *words*.

35. The late Sir Humphry Davy, President of the Royal Society.

36. The late Miss Lydia White, whose hospitable functions have not yet been supplied to the circle of London artists and literati — an accomplished, clever, and truly amiable, but very eccentric lady. The name in the text *could* only have been suggested by the jingling resemblance it bears to *Lydia*.

37. The abbé's biographer denies the correctness of this statement.

38. Laugier, Hist. de la Répub. de Venise, Italian translation, vol. iv. p. 30.

39. In February, 1817, Lord Byron writes to Mr. Murray: "Look into Doctor Moore's 'View of Italy' for me: in one of the volumes you will find an account of the Doge Valiero (it ought to be Falieri) and his conspiracy, or the motives of it. Get it transcribed for me, and send it in a letter to me soon. I want it, and cannot find so good an account of that business here; though the veiled patriot, and the place where he was crowned, and afterward decapitated, still exist and are shown. I have searched all their histories; but the policy of the old aristocracy made their writers silent on his motives, which were a private grievance against one of the patricians. I mean to write a tragedy on the subject, which appears to me very dramatic; an old man, jealous and conspiring against the state, of which he was actually reigning chief. The last circumstance makes it the most remarkable, and only fact of the kind, in all history of all nations."

40. MS. — "It is like being at the whole process of a woman's toilet — it disenchants."

41. While I was in the sub-committee of Drury Lane Theatre, I can vouch for my colleagues, and I hope for myself, that

we did our best to bring back the legitimate drama. I tried what I could to get "De Montfort" revived, but in vain, and equally in vain in favour of Sotheby's "Ivan," which was thought an acting play; and I endeavoured also to wake Mr. Coleridge to write a tragedy. Those who are not in the secret will hardly believe that the "School for Scandal" is the play which has brought *least money*, averaging the number of times it has been acted since its production; so Manager Dibdin assured me. Of what has occurred since Maturin's[1] "Bertram" I am not aware; so that I may be traducing, through ignorance, some excellent new writers: if so, I beg their pardon. I have been absent from England nearly five years, and, till last year, I never read an English newspaper since my departure, and am now only aware of theatrical matters through the medium of the *Parisian Gazette* of Galignani, and only for the last twelve months. Let me then deprecate all offence to tragic or comic writers, to whom I wish well, and of whom I know nothing. The long complaints of the actual state of the drama arise, however, from no fault of the performers. I can conceive nothing better than Kemble, Cooke, and Kean in their very different manners, or than Elliston in *gentleman's* comedy, and in some parts of tragedy. Miss O'Neill I never saw, having made and kept a determination to see nothing which should divide or disturb my recollection of Siddons. Siddons and Kemble were the *ideal* of tragic action; I never saw anything at all resembling them even in *person:* for this reason, we shall never see again Coriolanus or Macbeth. When Kean is blamed for want of dignity, we should remember that it is a grace, and not an art, and not to be attained by study. In all, *not* SUPERnatural parts, he is perfect; even his very defects belong, or seem to belong, to the

[1] The Rev. Charles Maturin (a curate in Dublin) died in 1824. His first production, the "House of Montorio," a romance, is the only one of his works that has survived him. When he wished his family to be aware that *the fit* was on him, this fantastical gentlemen used to stick a wafer on his forehead.—"Maturin," says Lord Byron, "sent his 'Bertram' and a letter to the Drury Lane Committee, without his address; so that at first I could give him no answer: when I at length hit upon his residence, I sent him a favourable one, and something more substantial."

parts themselves, and appear truer to nature. But of Kemble we may say, with reference to his acting, what the Cardinal de Retz said of the Marquis of Montrose, "that he was the only man he ever saw who reminded him of the heroes of Plutarch."

42. Mrs. Baillie's "Family Legend" is the only one of her dramas that ever had any success on the stage.

43. The Rev. Henry Hart Millman, of Brazen Nose College, Oxford, for some time professor of poetry in that university, and now rector of St. Mary's, Reading. "Fazio," which he wrote before taking his first degree at Oxford, is the only one of his plays that has done well on the stage.

44. John Wilson, of Magdalen College, Oxford, now professor of moral philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, — the well-known author of the "Isle of Palms," "Margaret Lyndsay," "Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life," etc., and the principal critic as well as humourist of *Blackwood's Magazine*.

45. Horace Walpole was born with talents to have distinguished himself in the higher departments of literature, of which the "Mysterious Mother," however disgusting the subject, must always be a splendid monument. It is true, to use one of his own expressions, that when choosing a topic so dreadful, it seemed as if he had loved melancholy till it had palled on his taste, and was obliged to dream with horror. But the good old English blank verse, the force of character expressed in the wretched mother, and in several of the inferior persons, argue a strength of conception and vigour of expression capable of great things, and which involuntarily carry us back to the earlier æra of the English drama, "when there were giants in the land." — *Croker*.

46. Goethe was ennobled, having the *Von* prefixed to his name, but never received the title of baron.

47. See Appendix, Note A.

48. Original MS. — "With seeming patience."

49. MS. — "He sits as deep in duty."

50. MS. — "Young, { galliard, / gallant, } gay, and haughty."

51. The Avogadori were three in number: they were the conductors of criminal prosecutions on the part of the state; and no act of the councils was valid, unless sanctioned by the presence of one of them.

52. Marino Faliero, dalla bella moglie — altri la gode, ed egli la mantiene. — *Sanuto.*

53. It is not in the plot only, curtailed and crippled as it is of what would have been its due proportions, that we think we can trace the injurious effects of Lord Byron's Continental prejudices and his choice of injudicious models. We trace them in the abruptness of his verse, which has all the harshness, though not all the vigour, of Alfieri, and which, instead of that richness and variety of cadence which distinguishes even the most careless of our elder dramatists, is often only distinguishable from prose by the unrelenting uniformity with which it is divided into decasyllabic portions. The sentence of the College of Justice was likely, indeed, to be prosaic; and Shakespeare and our other elder tragedians would have given it as *bonâ fide* prose, without that affectation (for which, however, Lord Byron has many precedents in modern times) which condemns letters, proclamations, the speeches of the vulgar, and the outcries of the rabble and the soldiery, to strut in the same precise measure with the lofty musings and dignified resentment of the powerful and the wise: — but Bertuccio Faliero might as well have spoken poetry. — *Heber.*

54. The first scenes represent, rather tediously, the Doge waiting impatiently for the sentence of the senate, and raving very extravagantly at its lenity. We think all this part very heavily and even unskilfully executed; nor can it be at all surprising that ordinary readers should not enter into his highness's fury, when it appears that even his nephew does not at first understand it. This dutiful person comments thus calmly on the matter, in a speech which, though set down by Lord Byron in lines of ten syllables, we shall take the liberty to print as prose — which it undoubtedly is — and very ordinary and homely prose, too. — "*Ber. Fal.* I cannot but agree with you, the sentence is too slight for the offence. It is not honourable in the Forty to affix so slight a penalty to that which was a foul affront to you, and even to them, as

being your subjects; but 'tis not yet without remedy: you can appeal to them once more, or to the Avogadori, who, seeing that true justice is withheld, will now take up the cause they once declined, and do you right upon the bold delinquent. Think you not thus, good uncle? Why do you stand so fixed? You heed me not. I pray you, hear me." — *Jeffrey.*

55. MS. — "Who threw his sting into a poisonous rhyme."

56. The youth, being at last talked into a better sense of what their house's honour requires, leaves the Doge brooding over some terrible revenge. At this moment, the captain of a galley comes to complain of an insult he had just received from a senator; and when the Doge rails at the whole senate in terms of great bitterness, is encouraged to inform him that a plot is on foot for its destruction, which he would do well to join; to which his highness, with marvellous little hesitation, assents, and agrees to come at midnight to this assemblage of plebeian desperadoes. If this were ever so authentically set down in history — which, however, it is not — it would still be a great deal too improbable for a modern tragedy. — *Jeffrey.*

57. An historical fact. See Marin Sanuto's "Lives of the Doges." — [Sanuto says that Heaven took away his senses for this buffet, and induced him to conspire: "Però fu permesso che il Faliero perdette l'intelletto," etc. — *B. Letters.*]

58. This officer was chief of the artisans of the arsenal, and commanded the Bucentaur, for the safety of which, even if an accidental storm should arise, he was responsible with his life. He mounted guard at the ducal palace during an interregnum, and bore the red standard before the new Doge on his inauguration; for which service his perquisites were the ducal mantle and the two silver basins from which the Doge scattered the regulated pittance which he was permitted to throw among the people. — *Amelot de la Houssaye*, 79.

59. "Upon this the admiral returned, 'My lord duke, if you would wish to make yourself a prince, and cut all those cuckoldy gentlemen to pieces, I have the heart, if you do but help me, to make you prince of all the state; and then you may punish them all.' Hearing this, the duke said: 'How can such a matter be brought about?' and so they discoursed thereon." Such is Sanuto's narrative, and we have nothing

more certain to offer. It is not easy to say whence he obtained his intelligence. If such a conversation as that which he relates really did occur, it must have taken place without the presence of witnesses, and therefore could be disclosed only by one of the parties. It is far more likely that the chronicler is relating that which he *supposed* than that which he *knew;* and, as it must be admitted that the interview with the admiral of the arsenal occurred, and that immediately after it the Doge was found linked with the daring band of which that officer was chief, there is no violation of probability in granting that some such conversation took place; and that the train was ignited by this collision of two angry spirits. — See "Sketches of Venetian History" (forming vols. xx. and xxi. of "The Family Library").

60. The bells of San Marco were never rung but by order of the Doge. One of the pretexts for ringing this alarm was to have been an announcement of the appearance of a Genoese fleet off the Lagune.

61. The state dungeons, called Pozzi, or wells, were sunk in the thick walls of the palace; and the prisoner, when taken out to die, was conducted across the gallery to the other side, and being then led back into the other compartment, or cell, upon the bridge, was there strangled. The low portal through which the criminal was taken into this cell is now walled up; but the passage is open, and is still known by the name of the Bridge of Sighs. — *Hobhouse.*

62. That deep descent (thou canst not yet discern
Aught as it is) leads to the dripping vaults
Under the flood, where light and warmth were never!
Leads to a covered bridge — the Bridge of Sighs —
And to that fatal closet at the foot,
Lurking for prey, which, when a victim came,
Grew less and less, contracting to a span; —
An iron-door, urged onward by a screw,
Forcing out life. — *Rogers.*

63. The Doges were all buried in St. Mark's *before* Faliero. It is singular that when his predecessor, Andrea Dandolo, died,

the Ten made a law that all the future Doges should be buried with their families in their own churches — one would think, by a kind of presentiment. So that all that is said of his *ancestral Doges*, as buried at St. John's and Paul's, is altered from the fact, they being in St. Mark's. Make a note of this, and put *Editor* as the subscription to it. As I make such pretentions to accuracy, I should not like to be twitted even with such trifles on that score. Of the play they may say what they please, but not so of my costume and *dram. pers.* — they having been real existences. — *B. Letters*, Oct., 1820.

64. A gondola is not like a common boat, but is as easily rowed with one oar as with two (though, of course, not so swiftly), and often is so from motives of privacy; and, since the decay of Venice, of economy.

65. What Gifford says of the first act is very consolatory. English, sterling *genuine English*, is a desideratum amongst you, and I am glad that I have got so much left; though Heaven knows how I retain it: I *hear* none but from my valet, and he is Nottinghamshire; and I *see* none but in your new publications, and theirs is *no* language at all, but jargon. Gifford says that it is good English, and Foscolo says that the characters are right Venetian —

"Here are in all *two* worthy voices gained."

— *B. Letters*, Sept., 1820.

66. MS. —

"What! is the sentence passed? { is he condemned? / has he been doomed?"

67. This scene is, perhaps, the finest in the whole play. The character of the calm, pure-spirited Angiolina is developed in it most admirably; the great difference between her temper and that of her fiery husband is vividly portrayed; but not less vividly touched is that strong bond of their union which exists in the common nobleness of their deeper natures. There is no spark of jealousy in the old man's thoughts, — he does not expect the fervours of youthful passion in his wife, nor does he find them: but he finds what is far better, — the fearless confidence of one who, being to the heart's core innocent, can scarcely be a believer in the existence of such a thing as

guilt. He finds every charm which gratitude, respect, anxious and deep-seated affection can give to the confidential language of a lovely and a modest and a pious woman. She has been extremely troubled by her observance of the countenance and gesture of the Doge, ever since the discovery of Steno's guilt; and she does all she can to soothe him from his proud irritation. Strong in her consciousness of purity, she has brought herself to regard without anger the insult offered to herself; and the yet uncorrected instinct of a noble heart makes her try to persuade her lord, as she is herself persuaded, that Steno, whatever be the sentence of his judges, *must* be punished — more even than they would wish him to be — by the secret suggestions of his own guilty conscience, — the deep blushes of his privacy. — *Lockhart.*

68. This scene between the Doge and Angiolina, though intolerably long, has more force and beauty than anything that goes before it. She endeavours to soothe the furious mood of her aged partner; while he insists that nothing but the libeller's death could make fitting expiation for his offence. This speech of the Doge is an elaborate and, after all, ineffectual attempt, by rhetorical exaggerations, to give some colour to the insane and unmeasured resentment on which the piece hinges. — *Jeffrey.*

69. MS. —

"Doth Heaven forgive her own? { is there not Hell? / is Satan saved

{ From wrath eternal? / But be it so."

70. MS. — "In pondering o'er your late { disquietudes. / inquietudes."

71. These passages, though not perfectly dramatic, have great sweetness and dignity, and remind us, in their rich verbosity, of the moral and mellifluous parts of Massinger. — *Jeffrey.*

72. MS. —

"Where death sits { throned / *or* / robed } in his all-sweeping shadow."

73. MS. —

"In a great cause : { the block may soak their gore. / their gore may soak the block."

74. MS. —

"If Brutus had not lived ? He { failed / died } in giving."

75. MS. —

"We fought to make our { equals, not our lords : —· / peers, and not our masters : — "

76. MS. — "By thy descendant, merit such { acquittance ? / requital ? "

77. The Doge, true to his appointment, is waiting for his conductor before the church of San Paolo e Giovanni. There is great loftiness, both of feeling and diction, in this passage. — *Jeffrey.*

78. There is a great deal of natural struggle in the breast of the high-born and haughty Doge, between the resentment with which he burns on the one hand, and the reluctance with which he considers the meanness of the associates with whom he has leagued himself, on the other. The conspiring Doge is not, we think, meant to be ambitious for himself, but he is sternly, proudly, a Venetian noble ; and it is impossible for him to tear from his bosom the scorn for everything plebeian which has been implanted there by birth, education, and a long life of princely command. There are other thoughts, too, and of a gentler kind, which cross from time to time his perturbed spirit. He remembers — he cannot entirely forget — the days and nights of old companionship, by which he had long been bound to those whose sentence he has consented to seal. He has himself been declaiming against the folly of mercy, and arguing valiantly the necessity of total extirpation, — and that, too, in the teeth even of some of the plebeian conspirators themselves : yet the poet, with profound insight into the human heart, makes him shudder when his own impetuosity has brought himself and all who hear him to the brink. He cannot look upon the bloody resolution, no, not even after he himself has been the chief instrument of its formation. — *Lockhart.*

79. MS.—

"Nor dwindle to { the thing I now must be. / a cut-throat without shuddering."

80. MS. — "A { scoundrel / roused } mechanic," etc.

81. An historical fact. See Appendix, Note A.

82. MS. — "So let them die { in / as } one."

83. MS. — "We are all { lost / listening } in wonder."

84. MS. — "Apparent sovereign of our { hundred isles. / splendid city."

85. MS. — "But all the { sins of the old Spartan state. / worst sins of the Spartan state."

86. MS. —

"Fought by my side, and { Marc Cornaro / John Grimani } shared

My { Genoese embassy ; / mission to the Pope ; } I saved the life," etc.

87. MS. — "Bear witness with me ! ye who hear and know,
And feel our mutual mass of many wrongs."

88. The Doge is at last ushered into the presence of the conspirators, who are at first disposed to sacrifice both him and his introducer ; but are pacified and converted by a speech of three pages, which is not very good : and then they put it in him to say, whether any of the devoted senate shall be spared in the impending massacre. He says :

"Ask me not — tempt me not with such a question —
Decide yourselves." —

But, on being further pressed, he, in these passages, gives way to feelings most natural to his own condition, but by no means calculated to recommend him to his new associates : and afterward, when he is left alone with the chief conspirator, the contrast of their situation is still more finely and forcibly elicited. — *Jeffrey.*

89. I could have forgiven the dagger or the bowl, anything but the deliberate desolation piled upon me, when I stood alone upon my hearth, with my household gods shivered around me. Do you suppose I have forgotten or forgiven it? It has, comparatively, swallowed up in me every other feeling, and I am only a spectator upon earth till a tenfold opportunity offers. It may come yet. — *B. Letters*, 1819.

90. MS. — "Sate grinning { ribaldry / mockery } and sneering scorn."

91. MS. —

"Playthings, to do their pleasure — and { then perish. / be broken."

92. The struggle of feelings with which the Doge undertakes the conspiracy is admirably contrasted with the ferocious eagerness of his low-born associates; and only loses its effect because we cannot but be sensible that the man who felt thus could not have gone on with his guilty project unless stimulated by some greater and more accumulated injuries than are, in the course of the tragedy, brought before the perception of the reader. — *Heber.*

93. MS. — "Nor turn aside to strike at such a { carrion. / wretch."

94. The great defect of "Marino Faliero" is, that the nature and character of the conspiracy excite no interest. It matters little that Lord Byron has been faithful to history, if the event is destitute of a poetic character. Like Alfieri, to whom, in many points, his genius approximates, he is fettered by an intractable story, which is wholly remote from the instincts and feelings of mankind. How elevated soever may be his diction, how vivid soever his colouring, a moral truth is wanting, — that charm, so difficult to define, so easy to apprehend, which, diffused over the scene, excites in generous bosoms an exalted enthusiasm for the great interests of humanity. This is the poesy of history. It is the charm of the William Tell of Schiller; it is felt in the awful plot of Brutus, and, to a certain degree, in the conspiracy of Pierre and Jaffier; for the end and purpose of these conspiracies were, to redeem their country

from insult and oppression. But in Marino Faliero's attempt against the state, we contemplate nothing but the project of a sanguinary ruffian, seeking to grasp unlimited authority, and making, after the established precedents of all usurpers, the wrongs and sufferings of the commonalty his pretence; while, in another aspect of his character, we see him goaded, by an imagined injury, into an enterprise which would have inundated Venice with her best blood. Is this a sublime spectacle, calculated to purge the mind, according to the aphorism of Aristotle, by means of terror or pity? — *Ecl. Rev.*

95. The unmixed selfishness of the motives with which the Doge accedes to the plot perpetually escapes him. Not that he is wholly untouched by the compunctious visitings of nature. But the fearful unity of such a character is broken by assigning to it the throbbings and the pangs of human feelings, and by making him recoil with affright from slaughter and desolation. In the roar and whirlwind of the mighty passions which precede the acting of a dreadful plot, it is wholly unreasonable and out of keeping to put into his mouth the sentimental effusions of affectionate pity for his friends, whom he thinks of rather too late to give these touches of remorse and mercy any other character than that of hypocritical whining. The sentiments are certainly good, but lamentably out of time and place, and remind us of Scarron's remark upon the moralising Phlegyas in the infernal regions, —

> "Cette sentence est vrai et belle,
> Mais dans enfer de quoi sert-elle?"

Yet though wholly repugnant to dramatic congruity, the passage has great poetic power. — *Ecl. Rev.*

96. MS. — "To this { unshackled / now shackled } city," etc.

97. The fourth act opens with the most poetical and brilliantly written scene in the play — though it is a soliloquy, and altogether alien from the business of the piece. Lioni, a young nobleman, returns home from a splendid assembly, rather out of spirits; and, opening his palace window for air, contrasts the tranquillity of the night scene which lies before him with

the feverish turbulence and glittering enchantments of that which he has just quitted. Nothing can be finer than this picture, in both its compartments. There is a truth and a luxuriance in the description of the rout, which mark at once the hand of a master, and raise it to a very high rank as a piece of poetical painting; — while the moonlight view from the window is equally grand and beautiful, and reminds us of those magnificent and enchanting lookings forth in "Manfred," which have left, we will confess, far deeper traces on our fancy than anything in the more elaborate work before us. — *Jeffrey.*

98. This soliloquy is exquisite, and increases our regret that, with such powers of pleasing, Lord Byron should not always have condescended to please. — *Heber.*

99. The soliloquy of Lioni is a fine instance of repose, as the painters term it, amidst the horrors of the scene, and of that obscure but ruthless presentiment of evil, of which Shakespeare frequently made a use somewhat similar. Yet this splendid passage, with reference to the romantic character of the poem, is adventitious, and obviously transplanted from the mind of the poet. It is the habitual cast of thought, tinged with misanthropy, which is peculiar to Lord Byron, and does not adapt itself to the situation or feelings of the personages of his poem. It is the cool contemplation of a mind raised above the storms of human life, and the perturbation of its passions, and viewing, as from "a peculiar mount," the strife and conflicts of a world in which it disdains to mix. — *Ecl. Rev.*

100. MS. — "If so, withdraw and fly, and tell me not."

101. MS. —

"Good I would now { repay / requite } with greater good."

102. MS. —

"Why, what hast thou to { gainsay / say against } the senate?"

103. MS. — "On the accursed tyranny which { faints. / rides."

104. MS. —

"I would not { draw / hold } my breath on such a tenure."

105. The Doge's family palace.

106. MS. — "The night is clearing from the sky."

107. At last the moment arrives when the bell is to be sounded, and the whole of the conspiring bands are watching in impatience for the signal. The nephew of the Doge, and the heir of the house (for he is childless), leaves Faliero in his palace, and goes to strike with his own hand the fatal summons. The Doge is left alone; and English poetry, we think, contains few passages superior to that which follows. — *Lockhart.*

108. MS. — "Where swings the sullen { iron oracle. / huge oracular bell."

109. Of rhetorical and highly embellished sentiments, there is no scarcity. But, while they are spoken by the personages of the drama, the poet is their prompter. They seem to be wholly adventitious to the piece, neither arising out of its events, nor illustrating its moral. But, in truth, the play has no moral purpose to illustrate. In Marino Faliero, we are neither delighted with the image of virtue, nor warmed with its glowing and noble sentiments. If, according to the rules of poetic justice, severe penalties visit the criminal, it is intercepted, in no inconsiderable degree, by the sympathies which the poet attempts to excite for his downfall. Another, and an equally serious exception to the tragedy, is its total want of progress. The action languishes from the beginning to the end. The principal cause of this dramatic paralysis, if we may be allowed the phrase, is, that the poet substitutes himself for his characters. It is he who philosophises in a strain of cold metaphysical speculation, while the persons of the scene should be in action. So fundamental is this fault, that in that most anxious moment of the piece, whilst Faliero is waiting in breathless and horrid expectation for the tolling of the dreadful bell, which, at the hour appointed for the insurrection, was to be the alarum of assignation and treason — even in this awful

moment, the Doge finds time for generalities and abstractions. How he could find leisure, in a crisis big with fate, to enter into an abstract reasoning upon the qualities and characters of "*leagues of this nature*," — correct and philosophically true as that reasoning is, — really astonishes us. And when, upon the detection of the plot, the officer comes with the warrant to apprehend him, he does not think it either unseasonable on such an occasion, or a departure from the stern dignity and proud daring of his character, to reason astutely and almost technically on its legality :

> "till that warrant has my signature
> It is illegal, and as now applied
> Rebellious."

There is much good sense in the answer of the officer, which, in substance, is this : "Sir, I cannot enter into these subtleties : the warrant was put into my hand, and, acting under the authority of my superiors, I shall be borne harmless. So, sir, be pleased to come along with me." — *Ecl. Rev.*

110. A relenting conspirator, whom the contemplative Lioni had formerly befriended, calls to warn him of his danger, and is gradually led to betray his associates. The plot is crushed in the moment of its development, and the Doge arrested in his palace. The scene immediately preceding this catastrophe is noble and thrilling. — *Jeffrey.*

111. "I Signori di Notte" held an important charge in the old republic.

112. MS. —

"That thus you dare assume a { lawless function. / brigand's power."

113. MS. —

"Or met some unforeseen and { fatal / hideous } obstacle."

114. MS. —

"While Manlius, who hurled { down / back } the Gauls," etc.

115. The fifth act, which begins with the arraignment of the original conspirators, is much in the style of that of Pierre and

his associates in the old play. After them, the Doge is brought in: his part is very forcibly written throughout. — *Jeffrey.*

116. In the notes to "Marino Faliero," it may be as well to say that Benintende was not really of the Ten, but merely Grand Chancellor — a separate office, though an important one. It was an arbitrary alteration of mine. — *B. Letters.*

117. MS. —

"There is no more to be { drawn / wrung } from these men."

118. "Giovedi grasso," — "fat or greasy Thursday," — which I cannot literally translate in the text, was the day.

119. Historical fact. See Sanuto, Appendix, Note A.

120. I know what Foscolo means, about Calendaro's *spitting* at Bertram; *that's* national — the objection, I mean. The Italians and French, with those "flags of abomination," their pocket-handkerchiefs, spit there, and here, and everywhere else — in your face almost, and therefore *object* to it on the stage as *too familiar.* But we who spit nowhere — but in a man's face when we grow savage — are not likely to feel this. Remember Massinger, and Kean's Sir Giles Overreach, —

"Lord! *thus* I *spit* at thee and at thy counsel!"

Besides, Calendaro does not spit in Bertram's face; he spits *at* him, as I have seen the Mussulmans do upon the ground when they are in a rage. Again, he does not in fact despise Bertram, though he affects it, — as we all do, when angry with one we think our inferior. He is angry at not being allowed to die in his own way (although not afraid of death); and recollect that he suspected and hated Bertram from the first. Israel Bertuccio, on the other hand, is a cooler and more concentrated fellow: he acts upon *principle* and impulse; Calendaro upon *impulse* and example. So there's argument for you. — "The Doge *repeats;*" — true, but it is from engrossing passion, and because he sees *different* persons, and is always obliged to recur to the *cause* uppermost in his mind. "His speeches are long;" — true, but I wrote for the *closet,* and on the French and Italian model rather than yours, which I think

not very highly of, for all your *old* dramatists, who are long enough too, God knows : *look* into any of them. — *B. Letters.*

121. MS. —

"It is { impending / approaching. } You decline to plead, then ?"

122. One source of feebleness in this passage, and it is one of frequent occurrence in all Lord Byron's plays, is his practice of ending his lines with insignificant monosyllables. "*Of*," "*to*," "*and*," "*till*," "*but*," "*from*," all concur in the course of a very few pages, in situations where, had the harmony or vigour of the line been consulted, the voice would have been allowed to pause, and the energy of the sentiment would have been carried to its highest tone of elevation. This we should have set down to the account of carelessness, had it not been so frequent, and had not the stiffness and labour of the author's general style almost tempted us to believe it systematic. A more inharmonious system of versification, or one more necessarily tending to weight and feebleness, could hardly have been invented. But with all these defects, there is much to praise in the "Doge of Venice." — *Heber.*

123. MS. —

"There were no other way for truth to { pierce / o'ertop } em."

124. MS. — "The torture { for the exposure of the truth. / to elicit the whole truth."

125. MS. — "Noble Venetians ! { Doge Faliero's consort. / with respect the Duchess. / Duchess Faliero."

126. The Venetian senate took the same title as the Roman, of "conscript fathers."

127. The drama, which has the merit, uncommon in modern performances, of embodying no episodical deformity whatever, now hurries in full career to its close. Everything is despatched with the stern decision of a tyrannical aristocracy. There is no hope of mercy on any side, —there is no petition, nay, there is no wish for mercy. Even the plebeian conspirators have too much Venetian blood in them to be either scared

by the approach, or shaken in the moment, of death: and, as for the Doge, he bears himself as becomes a warrior of sixty years, and a deeply insulted prince. At the moment, however, which immediately precedes the pronouncing of the sentence, admission is asked and obtained by one from whom less of the Spartan firmness might have been expected. This is Angiolina. She indeed hazards one fervent prayer to the unbending senate; but she sees in a moment that it is in vain, and she recovers herself on the instant; and turning to her lord, who stands calm and collected at the foot of the council table, speaks words worthy of him and of her. Nothing can be more unexpected, or more beautiful, than the behaviour of the young patrician who interrupts their conversation.— *Lockhart.*

128. MS. — "He hath already { own'd to / granted } his own guilt."

129. MS. —

"He is your sovereign, and hath { swayed / ruled } the state."

130. The duchess is formal and cold, without even that degree of love for her old husband which a child might have for her parent, or a pupil for her instructor. Even in this her longest and best speech, at the most touching moment of the catastrophe, she can moralise, in a strain of pedantry less natural to a woman than to any other person similarly circumstanced, on lions stung by gnats, Achilles, Helen, Lucretia, the siege of Clusium, Caligula, Caaba, and Persepolis! The lines are fine in themselves, indeed; and if they had been spoken by Benintende as a funeral oration over the duke's body, or still more, perhaps, if they had been spoken by the duke's counsel on his trial, they would have been perfectly in place and character. But that is not the highest order of female intellect which is disposed to be long-winded in distress; nor does any one, either male or female, who is really and deeply affected, find time for wise saws and instances ancient and modern. — *Heber.*

131. MS. — "Of treachery and treason never heard of."

132. MS. — "For this { our most / almost } miraculous deliverance."

133. This and the five preceding lines are not in the original MS.

134. MS. —

"Have I aught else to undergo { ere / save } death?"

135. MS. — "A madness of the heart shall rise within."

136. MS. — "With unimpaired but not outrageous grief."

137. { "'Tis well to be so, / I am glad to be so, } though but for a moment."

138. This was the actual reply of Bailli, maire of Paris, to a Frenchman who made him the same reproach on his way to execution, in the earliest part of their revolution. I find in reading over (since the completion of this tragedy), for the first time these six years, "Venice Preserved," a similar reply on a different occasion by Renault, and other coincidences arising from the subject. I need hardly remind the gentlest reader that such coincidences must be accidental, from the very facility of their detection by reference to so popular a play on the stage and in the closet as Otway's chef-d'œuvre.

139. Sentence being passed upon the Doge, he is brought with much pomp to the place of execution. His last speech is a grand prophetic rant; something strained and elaborate — but eloquent and terrible. — *Jeffrey.*

140. In the original MS. —

. . . "and Thou!
Who makest and destroyest suns!" —

"Change this," says Lord Byron, "to —

"'and Thou?
Who kindlest and quenchest suns!'" —
— *B. Letters*, Feb. 2, 1821.

141. Should the dramatic picture seem harsh, let the reader look to the historical, of the period prophesied, or rather of the

few years preceding that period. Voltaire calculated their "nostre bene merite Meretrici" at twelve thousand of regulars, without including volunteers and local militia, on what authority I know not; but it is, perhaps, the only part of the population not decreased. Venice once contained two hundred thousand inhabitants; there are now about ninety thousand; and THESE! few individuals can conceive, and none could describe, the actual state into which the more than infernal tyranny of Austria has plunged this unhappy city. From the present decay and degeneracy of Venice under the Barbarians, there are some honourable individual exceptions. There is Pasqualigo, the last, and alas! *posthumous* son of the marriage of the Doges with the Adriatic, who fought his frigate with far greater gallantry than any of his French coadjutors in the memorable action off Lissa. I came home in the squadron with the prizes in 1811, and recollect to have heard Sir William Hoste, and the other officers engaged in that glorious conflict, speak in the highest terms of Pasqualigo's behaviour. There is the Abbate Morelli. There is Alvise Querini, who, after a long and honourable diplomatic career, finds some consolation for the wrongs of his country, in the pursuits of literature with his nephew, Vittor Benzon, the son of the celebrated beauty, the heroine of "La Biondina in Gondoletta." There are the patrician poet Morosini, and the poet Lamberti, the author of the "Biondina," etc., and many other estimable productions; and, not least in an Englishman's estimation, Madame Michelli, the translator of Shakespeare. There are the young Dandolo and the improvvisatore Carrer, and Giuseppe Albrizzi, the accomplished son of an accomplished mother. There is Aglietti, and, were there nothing else, there is the immortality of Canova. Cicognara, Mustoxithi, Bucati, etc., I do not reckon, because the one is a Greek, and the others were born at least a hundred miles off, which, throughout Italy, constitutes, if not a *foreigner*, at least a *stranger* (*forestiere*).

142. MS. —

"Beggars for nobles, { lazars / lepers / wretches } for a people!"

143. The chief palaces on the Brenta now belong to the Jews, who in the earlier times of the republic were only allowed to inhabit Mestri, and not to enter the city of Venice. The whole commerce is in the hands of the Jews and Greeks, and the Huns form the garrison.

144. "It must be owned," says Bishop Heber, "that the duke bears his calamities with a patience which would be more heroic if it were less wordy. It is possible that a condemned man might recollect his quarrel with the Bishop of Treviso, and the evil omen which accompanied his solemn landing at Venice. But there are not many condemned men, who, during a last and stinted interview with a beloved wife, would have employed so much time in relating anecdotes of themselves; and we should least of all expect it in one whose fiery character would have induced him to hurry forward to his end. The same objection applies to his prophecy of the future miseries of Venice. Its language and imagery are, doubtless, extremely powerful and impressive; but we cannot allow that it is either dramatic or characteristic. A prophecy (which we knew to be *ex post facto*) is, under any circumstances, one of the cheapest and least artificial of poetical machines. But, under such circumstances as the present, no audience could have endured so long a speech without disgust and weariness; and Marino Faliero was most likely to have met his death like our own Sydney, —

> "'With no harangue idly proclaimed aloud
> To catch the worthless plaudit of the crowd;
> No feeble boast, death's terrors to defy,
> Yet still delaying, as afraid to die!'

His last speech to the executioner would, probably, have been his only one:

> "'Slave, do thine office!
> Strike as I struck the foe! Strike as I would
> Have struck those tyrants! Strike deep as my curse!
> Strike, — and but once!'"
>
> — *Qu. Rev.* vol. xxvii. p. 90.

We are surprised that Bishop Heber did not quote Andrew Marvell's magnificent lines on Charles I. :

"While round the armed bands
Did clap their bloody hands,
He nothing common did, or mean,
Upon that memorable scene;
But with his keener eye
The axe's edge did try;
Nor called the Gods with vulgar spight
To vindicate his helpless right,
But bowed his comely head
Down, as upon a bed."

145. If the Doge's prophecy seem remarkable, look to the following, made by Alamanni, two hundred and seventy years ago: "There is one very singular prophecy concerning Venice: 'If thou dost not change,' it says to that proud republic, 'thy liberty, which is already on the wing, will not reckon a century more than the thousandth year.' If we carry back the epocha of Venetian freedom to the establishment of the government under which the republic flourished, we shall find that the date of the election of the first Doge is 697; and if we add one century to a thousand, that is, eleven hundred years, we shall find the sense of the prediction to be literally this: 'Thy liberty will not last till 1797.' Recollect that Venice ceased to be free in the year 1796, the fifth year of the French republic; and you will perceive that there never was prediction more pointed, or more exactly followed by the event. You will, therefore, note as very remarkable the three lines of Alamanni addressed to Venice; which, however, no one has pointed out:

"'Se non cangi pensier, un secol solo
Non conterà sopra 'l millesimo anno
Tua libertà, che va fuggendo a volo.'

Many prophecies have passed for such, and many men have been called prophets for much less." — *Ginguené, Hist. Lit. de l'Italie*, t. ix. p. 144.

146. Of the first fifty Doges, *five* abdicated — *five* were banished with their eyes put out — *five* were MASSACRED — and *nine* deposed; so that *nineteen* out of fifty lost the throne by violence, besides two who fell in battle: this occurred long previous to the reign of Marino Faliero. One of his more immediate predecessors, Andrea Dandolo, died of vexation. Marino Faliero himself perished as related. Amongst his successors, — *Foscari*, after seeing his son repeatedly tortured and banished, was deposed, and died of breaking a blood-vessel, on hearing the bell of Saint Mark's toll for the election of his successor. Morosini was impeached for the loss of Candia; but this was previous to his dukedom, during which he conquered the Morea, and was styled the Peloponnesian. Faliero might truly say:

"Thou den of drunkards with the blood of princes!"

147. MS. — "Thou brothel of the waters! thou sea Sodom!"

148. The sentence is pronounced, a brief hour is permitted for the last devotions, and then, — still robed in his ducal gown, and wearing the diadem, — preceded with all the pomp of his station, from which he is to be degraded in the moment only before the blow be struck, — Marino Faliero is led solemnly to the Giants' Staircase, at the summit of which he had been crowned. On that spot he is to expiate his offence against the majesty of the Venetian state. His wife struggles to accompany him to the dreadful spot, but she faints, and he leaves her on the marble pavement, forbidding them to raise her, until all had been accomplished with himself. Lord Byron breaks out with all his power in the curse with which he makes this old man take leave of the scene of his triumphs and his sorrows. The present abject condition of her that "once did hold the gorgeous East in fee" — the barbarian sway under which she is bowed down to the dust — the profligacy of manners, which ought rather, perhaps, to have been represented as the cause than the consequence of the loss of Venetian liberty; — all these topics are handled, and handled as no writer but Byron could have dared to handle them. — *Lockhart.*

149. "Un Capo de' Dieci" are the words of Sanuto's Chronicle.

150. MS. — { "The gory head is rolling down the steps ! / The head is rolling down the gory steps ! " }

151. As a play, "Marino Faliero " is deficient in the attractive passions, in probability, and in depth and variety of interest; and revolts throughout, by the extravagant disproportion which the injury bears to the unmeasured resentment with which it is pursued. As a poem, though it occasionally displays great force and elevation, it obviously wants both grace and facility. The diction is often heavy and cumbrous, and the versification without sweetness or elasticity. It is generally very verbose, and sometimes exceedingly dull. Altogether it gives us the impression of a thing worked out against the grain, and not poured forth from the fulness of the heart or the fancy ; — the ambitious and elaborate work of a powerful mind engaged with an unsuitable task — not the spontaneous effusion of an exuberant imagination, sporting in the fulness of its strength. Everything is heightened and enforced with visible effort and design ; and the noble author is often contented to be emphatic by dint of exaggeration, and eloquent by the common topics of declamation. Lord Byron is, undoubtedly, a poet of the very first order, and has talents to reach the very highest honours of the drama. But he must not again disdain love, and ambition, and jealousy ; he must not substitute what is merely *bizarre* and extraordinary, for what is naturally and universally interesting, nor expect, by any exaggerations, so to rouse and rule our sympathies by the senseless anger of an old man, and the prudish proprieties of an untempted woman, as by the agency of the great and simple passions with which, in some of their degrees, all men are familiar, and by which alone the Dramatic Muse has hitherto wrought her miracles. — *Jeffrey.*

On the whole, the " Doge of Venice "[1] is the effect of a power-

[1] In *Blackwood's Magazine* for 1822, we find a comical rhyming chronicle of Lord Byron's poetical history, of which the following specimen may amuse the reader:

" To Venice he hied him,
And that city supplied him
With the matter capricious
For his ' Beppo ' facetious;

ful and cultivated mind. It has all the requisites of tragedy, sublimity, terror, and pathos — all but that without which the rest are unavailing, interest! With many detached passages which neither derogate from Lord Byron's former fame, nor would have derogated from the reputation of our best ancient tragedians, it is, as a whole, neither sustained nor impressive. The poet, except in the soliloquy of Lioni, scarcely ever seems to have written with his own thorough good liking. He may be suspected throughout to have had in his eye some other model than nature; and we rise from his work with the same feeling as if we had been reading a translation. For this want of interest the subject itself is, doubtless, in some measure to blame; though, if the same subject had been differently treated,

A model, so please ye,
Of a style free and easy.
The story that's in it
Might be told in a minute;
But *par parenthèse* chatting,
On this thing and that thing,
Keeps the shuttlecock flying,
And attention from dying.
There are some I could mention,
Think the author's intention
Was to sneer and disparage
The vow made in marriage;
But the sneer, as I take it,
Is against folks who break it.
Thunders in now on horseback
'Mazeppa' the Cossack;
Though he was not a Hetman
In performing that feat, man;
And a wag, for his trouble,
Called him John Gilpin's double.
The Great 'Doge of Venice'
Little joy stirred within us;
And the purse of Old Drury
Was not burst, I assure ye,
With the weight of the treasure,
When, in spite of displeasure,
And legal injunction,
Abjuring compunction,
This play they enlisted,
And to act it persisted,
Till 'twas thoroughly hissed at."

we are inclined to believe a very different effect would have been produced. But for the constraint and stiffness of the poetry, we have nothing to blame but the apparent resolution of its author to set (at whatever risk) an example of classical correctness to his uncivilised countrymen, and rather to forego success than to succeed after the manner of Shakespeare. — *Heber.*

152. Mr. Francis Cohen, now Sir Francis Palgrave, K. H., the learned author of the "Rise and Progress of the English Constitution," "History of the Anglo-Saxons," etc.

153. In a letter to Mr. Murray, dated Ravenna, July 30, 1821, Lord B. says: "Enclosed is the best account of the Doge Faliero, which was only sent to me, from an old MS., the other day. Get it translated, and append it as a note to the next edition. You will, perhaps, be pleased to see that my conceptions of his character were correct, though I regret not having met with the extract before. You will perceive that he himself said exactly what he is made to say about the Bishop of Treviso. You will see also that he spoke little, and those only words of rage and disdain, AFTER his arrest; which is the case in the play, except when he breaks out at the close of Act fifth. But his speech to the conspirators is better in the MS. than in the play. I wish I had met with it in time."

154. Had a copy taken of an extract from "Petrarch's Letters," with reference to the conspiracy of the Doge Marino Faliero, containing the poet's opinion of the matter. — *B. Diary*, Feb. 11, 1821.

155. This is by no means a single case: A Venetian judge, displaced, but pensioned by the Austrians, neglected to receive his allowance according to the example of the others. At length he applied for his arrears, which were denied him. "What!" said he, "will you not give me what others have received?" "No!" was the answer, "and those others will be forced to refund." — Note that these pensions had been paid in virtue of a solemn and *printed* decree.

156. The qualification to be a count was about what is supposed to qualify for knighthood in England, and the fee paid for the title, if I am rightly informed, £20 or £40.

157. No order of knighthood was peculiar to Venice, and her citizens were precluded by law from becoming members of foreign orders.

158. In 1821, when Mr. Southey applied to the Court of Chancery for an injunction to restrain the publication of "Wat Tyler," Lord Chancellor Eldon pronounced the following judgment: "I have looked into all the affidavits, and have read the book itself. The bill goes the length of stating that the work was composed by Mr. Southey in the year 1794; that it is his own production, and that it has been published by the defendants without his sanction or authority; and therefore seeking an account of the profits which have arisen from, and an injunction to restrain, the publication. I have examined the cases that I have been able to meet with containing precedents for injunctions of this nature, and I find that they all proceed upon the ground of a title to the property in the plaintiff. On this head a distinction has been taken, to which a considerable weight of authority attaches, supported, as it is, by the opinion of Lord Chief Justice Eyre; who has expressly laid it down, that a person cannot recover in damages for a work which is, in its nature, calculated to do injury to the public. Upon the same principle this court refused an injunction in the case of Wolcott" (Peter Pindar) "*v.* Walker, inasmuch as he could not have recovered damages in an action. After the fullest consideration, I remain of the same opinion as that which I entertained in deciding the case referred to. Taking all the circumstances into my consideration, it appears to me that I cannot grant this injunction, until after Mr. Southey shall have established his right to the property by action." — Injunction refused.

159. Mr. William Smith, M. P. for Norwich, made a virulent attack on Mr. Southey in the House of Commons on the 14th of March, 1817, and the laureate replied by a letter in the *Courier*. As this speech and answer embrace almost all the points on which Lord Byron ever assailed his distinguished brother poet, we think it right to place both in an appendix to "Quevedo Redivivus."

160. Among the effusions of Mr. Southey's juvenile muse, we find this "Inscription for the Apartment in Chepstow

Castle, where Henry Martin, the regicide, was imprisoned thirty years:

"For thirty years secluded from mankind
Here Martin lingered. Often have these walls
Echoed his footsteps, as with even tread
He paced around his prison. Not to him
Did Nature's fair varieties exist;
He never saw the sun's delightful beams;
Save when through yon high bars he pour'd a sad
And broken splendour. Dost thou ask his crime?
He had rebelled against the King, and sat
In judgment on him; for his ardent mind
Shaped goodliest plans of happiness on earth,
And peace and liberty. Wild dreams! but such
As Plato loved; such as, with holy zeal,
Our Milton worshipped. Blessed hopes! awhile
From man withheld, even to the latter days
When Christ shall come, and all things be fulfilled."

161. The following imitation of the "Inscription on the Regicide's Apartment," written by Mr. Canning, appeared in the *Anti-jacobin:*

"Inscription for the Door of the Cell in Newgate, where Mrs. Brownrigg, the 'Prentice-cide, was confined, previous to her Execution.

"For one long term, or ere her trial came,
Here Brownrigg lingered. Often have these cells
Echoed her blasphemies, as with shrill voice
She screamed for fresh geneva. Not to her
Did the blithe fields of Tothill, or thy street,
St. Giles, its fair varieties expand;
Till at the last in slow-drawn cart she went
To execution. Dost thou ask her crime?
She whipped two female 'prentices to death,
And hid them in the coal-hole. For her mind
Shaped strictest plans of discipline. Sage schemes!

Such as Lycurgus taught, when at the shrine
Of the Orthyan goddess he bade flog
The little Spartans; such as erst chastised
Our Milton, when at college. For this act
Did Brownrigg swing. Harsh laws! But time shall come
When France shall reign, and laws be all repealed."

162. Here Lord Byron very modestly informs us that he has done more good in any one year of his life than Mr. Southey has done in the whole of the years he has lived upon the earth. We are much at a loss to understand the drift of this very candid communication. Does Lord Byron mean to say that he has given away more money in charity than the laureate could afford to do? We believe that this may very well be so; but why trumpet his own almsgiving in such a pompous fashion upon the housetop? There are plenty of good rich old widow ladies, who have subscribed lots of money to all sorts of charities, and advertised all their largesses in the newspapers; but are they entitled on that account to talk of themselves as doing more "good" than Southey? — *Blackwood*, 1822.

163. Mr. Coleridge.

164. Baron Geramb, — a German Jew, who, for some time, excited much public attention in London by the extravagance of his dress. Being very troublesome and menacing in demanding remuneration from government, for a proposal he had made of engaging a body of Croat troops in the service of England, he was, in 1812, sent out of the country under the alien act.

165. The "Green Man" was a popular afterpiece, so called from the hero, who wore everything green, hat, gloves, etc.

166. Mr. P. B. Shelley signed his name, with the addition of ἄθεος, in this album.

167. George III. died the 29th of January, 1820, — a year in which the revolutionary spirit broke out all over the south of Europe.

168. Here, perhaps, the reader will thank us for transcribing a few of Mr. Southey's hexameters:

"Pensive, though not in thought, I stood at the window, beholding]
Mountain, and lake, and vale; the valley disrobed of its verdure:
Thus as I stood, the bell, which awhile from its warning had rested,
Sent forth its note again, TOLL! TOLL! through the silence of evening.
'Tis a deep dull sound, that is heavy and mournful at all times,
For it tells of mortality always. But heavier this day
Fell on the conscious ear its deeper and mournfuller import,
Yea, in the heart it sunk; for this was the day when the herald,
Breaking his wand, should proclaim, that George our King was departed.
Thou art released! I cried: thy soul is delivered from bondage!
Thou, who hast lain so long in mental and visual darkness,
Thou art in yonder heaven! thy place is in light and in glory.
Come, and behold!—methought a startling voice from the twilight
Answered; and therewithal I felt a stroke as of lightning,
With a sound like the rushing of winds, or the roaring of waters.
If from without it came, I knew not, so sudden the seizure;
Or if the brain itself in that strong flash had expended
All its electric stores. Of strength and of thought it bereft me;
Hearing, and sight, and sense were gone."

—*Southey's Vision of Judgment.*

169. So by the unseen comforted, raised I my head in obedience,
And in a vault I found myself placed, arched over on all sides.
Narrow and low was that house of the dead. Around it were coffins
Each in its niche, and palls, and urns, and funeral hatchments,
Velvets of Tyrian dye, retaining their hues unfaded;
Blazonry vivid still, as if fresh from the touch of the limner;

Nor was the golden fringe, nor the golden broidery, tarnished.
Whence came the light whereby that place of death was discovered?
For there was no lamp, etc.

— *Southey.*

170. O'er the adamantine gates an Angel stood on the summit.
Ho! he exclaimed, King George of England cometh to judgment!
Hear Heaven! Ye Angels, hear! Souls of the Good and the Wicked
Whom it concerns, attend! Thou Hell, bring forth his accusers!
As the sonorous summons was uttered, the Winds, who were waiting,
Bore it abroad thro' Heaven; and Hell, in her nethermost corners,
Heard and obeyed in dismay.
. . . A multitudinous army
Came at the awful call. In semicircle inclining,
Tier over tier they took their place: aloft, in the distance,
Far as the sight could pierce, that glorious company glistened.
From the skirts of the shining assembly, a slippery vapour
Rose in the blue serene, and moving onward it deepened,
Taking a denser form.

— *Southey.*

171. Louis XVI., guillotined in January, 1793.

172. Then I beheld the King. From a cloud which covered the pavement
His reverend form uprose: heavenward his face was directed,
Heavenward his eyes were raised, and heavenward his arms were extended.
Presently one approached to greet him with joyful obeisance;
He of whom, in an hour of woe, the assassin bereaved us
When his counsels most, and his resolute virtue, were needed.
Thou! said the Monarch, here? Thou, PERCEVAL, summoned before me? —

Then, as his wakened mind to the weal of the country reverted,
What of his Son, he asked, what course by the Prince had been followed ?
Right in his Father's steps hath the Regent trod, was the answer :
Firm hath he proved, and wise, at a time when weakness or error
Would have sunk us in shame, and to ruin have hurled us headlong. —
Peace is obtained then at last, with safety and honour ! the Monarch
Cried, and he clasped his hands, — I thank thee, O merciful Father ! —
Peace hath been won by the sword, the faithful minister answered.
Paris hath, etc.

— *Southey.*

173. See Captain Sir Edward Parry's "Voyage, in 1819-20, for the Discovery of a Northwest Passage." — "I believe it is almost impossible for words to give an idea of the beauty and variety which this magnificent phenomenon displayed. The luminous arch had broken into irregular masses, streaming with much rapidity in different directions, varying continually in shape and interest, and extending themselves from north, by the east, to north. At one time a part of the arch near the zenith was bent into convolutions resembling those of a snake in motion, and undulating rapidly, an appearance which we had not before observed. The end toward the north was also bent like a shepherd's crook. The usual pale light of the aurora strongly resembled that produced by the combustion of phosphorus ; a very slight tinge of red was noticed on this occasion, when the aurora was most vivid, but no other colours were visible."

174. Thus as he spake, methought the surrounding space dilated ;
Overhead I beheld the infinite ether ; beneath us
Lay the solid expanse of the firmament spread like a pavement ;

Wheresoever I looked, there was light and glory around me ;
Brightest it seemed in the East, where the New Jerusalem glittered.
Eminent on a hill, there stood the Celestial City ;
Beaming afar it shone ; its towers and cupolas rising
High in the air serene, with the brightness of gold in the furnace,
Where on their breadth the splendour lay intense and quiescent :
Part with a fierier glow, and a short quick tremulous motion
Like the burning pyropus ; and turrets and pinnacles sparkled,
Playing in jets of light, with a diamond-like glory coruscant.
Drawing near, I beheld what over the portal was written :
This is the Gate, etc.

— *Southey.*

175. Johanna Southcote, the aged lunatic, who fancied herself, and was believed by many followers, to be with child of a new Messiah, died in 1815. There is a full account of her in the *Quarterly Review.*

176. No saint in the course of his religious warfare was more sensible of the unhappy failure of the pious resolves than Doctor Johnson : he said one day, talking to an acquaintance on this subject, "Sir, hell is paved with good intentions." — *Croker's Boswell.*

177. George III.'s determination against the Catholic claims.

178. From the opposite region,
Heavy and sulphurous clouds rolled on, and completed the circle.
There with the Spirits accurst, in congenial darkness enveloped
Were the Souls of the Wicked, who, wilful in guilt and error,
Chose the service of sin, and now were abiding its wages.
Change of place to them brought no reprieval from anguish ;
They in their evil thoughts and desires of impotent malice,
Envy, and hate, and blasphemous rage, and remorse unavailing,
Carried a hell within, to which all outer affliction,

So it abstracted the sense, might be deemed a remission of
torment.
At the edge of the cloud, the Princes of Darkness were mar-
shalled ;
Dimly descried within were wings and truculent faces ;
And in the thick obscure there struggled a mutinous uproar,
Railing, and fury, and strife, that the whole deep body of
darkness
Rolled like a troubled sea, with a wide and a manifold motion.
— *Southey.*

179. A gold or gilt key, peeping from below the skirts of the coat, marks a lord chamberlain.

180. An allusion to Horace Walpole's expression in a letter — "the summer has set in with *its usual severity*."

181. On the cerulean floor by that dread circle surrounded,
Stood the soul of the King alone. In front was the Presence
Veiled with excess of light ; and behind was the blackness of
darkness ;
When the trumpet was blown, and the Angel made proclama-
tion —
Lo, where the King appears ! Come forward, ye who arraign
him !
Forth from the lurid cloud a Demon came at the summons.
It was the Spirit by whom his righteous reign had been
troubled ;
Likest in form uncouth to the hideous Idols whom India
(Long by guilty neglect to hellish delusions abandoned,)
Worships with horrible rites of self-destruction and torture.
Many-headed and monstrous the Fiend ; with numberless
faces,
Numberless bestial ears erect to all rumours, and restless,
And with numberless mouths which were filled with lies as
with arrows.
Clamours arose as he came, a confusion of turbulent voices,
Maledictions, and blatant tongues, and viperous hisses ;
And in the hubbub of senseless sounds the watchwords of
faction, —

Freedom, Invaded Rights, Corruption, and War, and Oppression —
Loudly enounced were heard."

— *Southey.*

182. But when he stood in the Presence,
Then was the Fiend dismayed, though with impudence clothed as a garment;
And the lying tongues were mute, and the lips, which had scattered
Accusation and slander, were still. No time for evasion
This, in the Presence he stood: no place for flight; for dissembling
No possibility there. From the souls on the edge of the darkness,
Two he produced, prime movers and agents of mischief, and bade them
Show themselves faithful now to the cause for which they had laboured.
Wretched and guilty souls, where now their audacity? Where now
Are the insolent tongues so ready of old at rejoinder?
Where the lofty pretences of public virtue and freedom?
Where the gibe, and the jeer, and the threat, the envenomed invective,
Calumny, falsehood, fraud, and the whole ammunition of malice?
Wretched and guilty souls, they stood in the face of their Sovereign,
Conscious and self-condemned; confronted with him they had injured,
At the Judgment-seat[1] they stood. —

— *Southey.*

[1] In reference to this part of Mr. Southey's poem, the "Eclectic Reviewer," we believe the late Rev. Robert Hall, said: "Mr. Southey's 'Vision of Judgment' is unquestionably a profane poem. The assertion will stagger those only who do not consider what is the import of the word. Profaneness is the irreverent use of sacred names and things. A burlesque of things sacred, whether intentional or not, is

183. Beholding the foremost,
Him by the *cast of his eye* oblique, I knew as the firebrand
Whom the unthinking populace held for their idol and hero,
Lord of Misrule in his day. But how was that countenance altered
Where emotion of fear or of shame had never been witnessed;
That invincible forehead abashed; and those eyes wherein malice
Once had been wont to shine with wit and hilarity tempered,
Into how deep a gloom their mournful expression had settled!
Little availed it now that not from a purpose malignant,
Not with evil intent, he had chosen the service of evil,
But of his own desires the slave, with profligate impulse,
Solely by selfishness moved, and reckless of aught that might follow
Could he plead in only excuse a confession of baseness?
Could he hide the extent of his guilt; or hope to atone for
Faction excited at home, when all old feuds were abated,
Insurrection abroad, and the train of woes that had followed!
Discontent and disloyalty, like the teeth of the dragon,

profaneness. To apply the language of Scripture in a ludicrous connection is to profane it. The mummery of prayer on the stage, though in a serious play, is a gross profanation of sacred things. And all acts which come under the taking of God's name in vain are acts of profaneness. According to this definition of the word, the laureate's 'Vision of Judgment' is a poem grossly and unpardonably profane. Mr. Southey's intention was, we are well persuaded, very far from being irreligious; and, indeed, the profaneness of the poem partly arises from the ludicrous effect produced by the bad taste and imbecility of the performance, for which his intentions are clearly not answerable. Whatever liberties a poet may claim to take, in representations partly allegorical, with the invisible realities of the world to come, the ignis fatuus of political zeal has, in this instance, carried Mr. Southey far beyond any assignable bounds of poetical license. It would have been enough to celebrate the apotheosis of the monarch; but, when he proceeds to travestie the final judgment, and to convert the awful tribunal of Heaven into a drawing-room levee where he, the poet laureate, takes upon himself to play the part of a lord in waiting, presenting one Georgian worthy after another to kiss hands on promotion, — what should be grave is, indeed, turned to farce."

He had sown on the winds; they had ripened beyond the
Atlantic;[1]
France had received the seeds, and reaped the harvest of
horrors;
Where — where should the plague be stayed? Oh, most to be
pitied
They of all souls in bale, who see no term to the evil
They by their guilt have raised, no end to their inner upbraid-
ings!
Him I could not choose but know, etc.

— *Southey.*

184. For the political history of John Wilkes, who died chamberlain of the city of London, we must refer to any history of the reign of George III. His profligate personal character is abundantly displayed in the collection of his letters, published by *his daughter!* since his death.

185. Who might the other be, his comrade in guilt and in
suffering,
Brought to the proof like him, and shrinking like him from
the trial?
Nameless the Libeller lived, and shot his arrows in darkness;
Undetected he passed to the grave, and, leaving behind him
Thence in natural birth, sedition, revolt, revolution,
Noxious works on earth, and the pest of an evil example,
Went to the world beyond, where no offences are hidden.

[1] Our new world has generally the credit of having first lighted the torch which was to illuminate, and soon set in a blaze, the finest part of Europe; yet I think the first flint was struck, and the first spark elicited, by the patriot John Wilkes, a few years before. In a time of profound peace, the restless spirit of men, deprived of other objects of public curiosity, seized with avidity on those questions which were then agitated with so much violence in England, touching the rights of the people and of the government, and the nature of power. The end of the political drama was in favour of what was called, and in some respects was, the liberty of the people. Encouraged by the success of this great comedian, the curtain was no sooner dropped on the scene of Europe, than new actors hastened to raise it again in America, and to give the world a new play, infinitely more interesting and more brilliant than the first. — *M. Simond.*

Masked had he been in his life, and now a visor of iron,
Riveted round his head, had abolished his features for ever.
Speechless the slanderer stood, and turned his face from the Monarch,
Iron-bound as it was, . . . so insupportably dreadful
Soon or late to conscious guilt is the eye of the injured.
— *Southey.*

186. Among the various persons to whom the "Letters of Junius" have been attributed we find the Duke of Portland, Lord George Sackville, Sir Philip Francis, Mr. Burke, Mr. Dunning, the Rev. John Horne Tooke, Mr. Hugh Boyd, Doctor Wilmot, etc.

187. I don't know what to think. Why should Junius be dead? If suddenly apoplexed, would he rest in his grave without sending his *αἰδωλον* to shout in the ears of posterity, "Junius was X. Y. Z., Esq., buried in the parish of . . ." Repair his monument, ye churchwardens! Print a new edition of his Letters, ye booksellers! Impossible, — the man *must be alive*, and will never die without the disclosure. I like him; — he was a good hater. — *B. Diary*, Nov. 23, 1813. — Sir Philip Francis died in December, 1818.

188. The mystery of "l'homme au masque de fer," the everlasting puzzle of the last century, has at length, in general opinion, been cleared up, by a French work published in 1825, and which formed the basis of an entertaining one in English by Lord Dover. See the *Quarterly Review*, vol. xxxiv. p. 19.

189. That the work entitled "The Identity of Junius with a distinguished Living Character established" proves Sir Philip Francis to be Junius, we will not affirm; but this we can safely assert, that it accumulates such a mass of circumstantial evidence, as renders it extremely difficult to believe he is not, and that, if so many coincidences shall be found to have misled us in this case, our faith in all conclusions drawn from proofs of a similar kind may henceforth be shaken. — *Mackintosh.*

190. The well-known motto of Junius is, "*Stat nominis umbra.*"

191. Caitiffs, are ye dumb? cried the multifaced Demon in anger;
Think ye then by shame to shorten the term of your penance?
Back to your penal dens! — And with horrible grasp gigantic
Seizing the guilty pair, he swung them aloft, and in vengeance
Hurled them all abroad, far into the sulphurous darkness.
Sons of Faction, be warned! And ye, ye Slanderers! learn ye
Justice, and bear in mind that after death there is judgment.
Whirling, away they flew! Nor long himself did he tarry,
Ere from the ground where he stood, caught up by a vehement whirlwind,
He too was hurried away; and the blast with lightning and thunder
Vollying aright and aleft amid the accumulate blackness,
Scattered its inmates accurst, and beyond the limits of ether
Drove the hircine host obscene; they howling and groaning
Fell precipitate down to their dolorous place of endurance.
— *Southey.*

192. The roll of the thunder
Ceased, and all sounds were hushed, till again from the gate adamantine
Was the voice of the Angel heard through the silence of Heaven.
Ho! he exclaimed, King George of England standeth in judgment!
Hell hath been dumb in his presence. Ye who on earth arraigned him,
Come ye before him now, and here accuse or absolve him!
. . . From the Souls of the Blessed,
Some were there then who advanced; and more from the skirts of the meeting,
Spirits who had not yet accomplished their purification,
Yet being cleansed from pride, from faction and error delivered,
Purged of the film wherewith the eye of the mind is clouded,
They, in their better state, saw all things clear. . . .
One alone remained, when the rest had retired to their station:
Silently he had stood, and still unmoved and in silence,
With a steady mien, regarded the face of the Monarch.

Thoughtful awhile he gazed : —
"Here then at the Gate of Heaven we are met!" said the Spirit;
"King of England! albeit in life opposed to each other,
Here we meet at last. Not unprepared for the meeting
Ween I; for we had both outlived all enmity, rendering
Each to each that justice which each from each had withholden.
In the course of events, to thee I seemed as a Rebel,
Thou a Tyrant to me;" — so strongly doth circumstance rule men
During evil days, when right and wrong are confounded!
"Washington!" said the Monarch, "well hast thou spoken, and truly.
Just to thyself and to me. On them is the guilt of the contest
Who, for wicked ends, with foul arts of faction and falsehood,
Kindled and fed the flame: but verily they have their guerdon.
Thou and I are free from offence." —
When that Spirit withdrew, the Monarch around the assembly
Looked, but none else came forth, etc.

— *Southey.*

193. Mr. Southey's residence was on the shore of Derwentwater, near the mountain Skiddaw.

194. Mediocribus esse poetis
Non Di, non homines, non concessere columnæ.

— *Horace.*

Tout genre est permis, hors le genre ennuyeux.

— *Boileau.*

195. The king's trick of repeating his words in this way was a fertile source of ridicule to Peter Pindar (Doctor Wolcott); for example:

"The conquering monarch, stopping to take breath
Amidst the regiments of death,
Now turned to Whitbread with complacence round,
And, merry, thus addressed the man of beer: —
'Whitbread, is't true? I hear, I hear,
You're of an ancient family — renowned —

What? What? I'm told that you're a limb
Of Pym, the famous fellow Pym:
What, Whitbread, is it true what people say?
Son of a roundhead are you? hæ? hæ? hæ?
Thirtieth of January don't you feed?
Yes, yes, you eat calf's head, you eat calf's head!'"

196. Henry James Pye, the predecessor of Mr. Southey in the poet-laureateship, died in 1813. He was the author of many works, besides his official odes, among others "Alfred," an epic poem — all of which have been long since defunct. Pye was a man of good family in Berkshire, sat some time in Parliament, and was eminently respectable in everything but his poetry.

197. See "Life of Henry Kirke White."

198. This sarcasm about Southey's professional authorship comes with a bad grace from a man who, for several years, has been in the habit of receiving several thousand pounds per annum, all for value received in verse and prose, from the magnificent exchequer of Albemarle Street. What right has Lord Byron to sneer at Southey as a "writer of all work?" Has he not himself published, within these two years, two volumes of tragic blank verse; one volume of licentious *ottava rima;* one pamphlet of clever polemical criticism, seasoned with personalities against all sorts of men; besides writing an Armenian grammar? — *Blackwood*, 1822.

199. Lift up your heads, ye Gates; and ye everlasting Portals,
Be ye lift up! For lo! a glorified Monarch approacheth,
One who in righteousness reigned, and religiously governed his people.
Who are these that await him within? — Nassau, the Deliverer,
Him I knew . . . Thou, too, O matchless Eliza,
Excellent Queen, wert there! and thy brother's beautiful spirit.
There too was he of the sable mail, the hero of Cressy,
Lion-hearted Richard was there, redoubtable warrior.
. . . I saw the spirit of Alfred —

Alfred than *whom* no prince with loftier intellect gifted.
. . . Bede I beheld, who, humble and holy,
Shone like a single star, serene in a night of darkness.
Bacon also was there, the marvellous Friar;
Thee, too, Father Chaucer! I saw, and delighted to see thee —
And Shakespeare, who in our hearts for himself hath erected an empire.
. . . A train, whom nearer duty attracted,
Through the Gate of Bliss came forth to welcome their Sovereign.
Many were they, and glorious all. Conspicuous among them
Wolfe was seen; and the Seaman who fell on the shores of Owhyhee.[1]
And the mighty Musician of Germany,[2] ours by adoption,
Who beheld in the King his munificent pupil and patron —
There, too, Wesley I saw and knew — And Burke I beheld there.
Here, where wrongs are forgiven, was the injured Hastings beside him;
There was our late-lost Queen, the nation's example of virtue, etc.
— *Southey.*

200. Alfonso, speaking of the Ptolomean system, said that, "had he been consulted at the creation of the world, he would have spared the Maker some absurdities."

201. See Aubrey's account of the apparition which disappeared "with a curious perfume and a *most melodious twang;*" or see the "Antiquary," vol. i. p. 225. — "As the vision shut his volume, a strain of *delightful music* seemed to fill the apartment." — "The usual time," says Grose, "at which ghosts make their appearance is midnight, and seldom before it is dark; though some audacious spirits have been said to appear even by daylight; but of this there are few instances, and those mostly ghosts who had been laid, and whose terms of confinement were expired. I cannot learn that ghosts carry tapers in their hands, as they are sometimes depicted. Dragging chains is not the fashion of English ghosts: chains and black vestments being chiefly the accoutrements of foreign

[1] Cook. [2] Handel.

spectres seen in arbitrary governments; dead or alive, English spirits are free. During the narration of its business, a ghost must by no means be interrupted by questions of any kind: its narration being completed, it vanishes away, frequently in a flash of light; in which case, some ghosts have been so considerate as to desire the party to whom they appeared to shut their eyes: — sometimes its departure is attended with *most delightful music.* — *Provincial Glossary.*

202. When I beheld them meet, the desire of my soul o'ercame me;
And when with harp and voice the loud hosannahs of welcome
Filled the rejoicing sky, as the happy company entered
Through the Everlasting Gates; I, too, pressed forward to enter —
But the weight of the body withheld me. — I stooped to the fountain,
Eager to drink thereof, and to put away all that was earthly.
Darkness came over me then at the chilling touch of the water,
And my feet methought sunk, and I fell precipitate. Starting,
Then I awoke, and beheld the mountains in twilight before me,
Dark and distinct; and, instead of the rapturous sound of hosannahs,
Heard the bell from the tower, TOLL! TOLL! through the silence of evening. — *Southey.*

203. A drowned body lies at the bottom till rotten; it then floats, as most people know.

204. Southey's "Vision of Judgment" appears to us to be an ill-judged, and not a well-executed work. It certainly has added nothing to the reputation of its author in any respect. The nobleness of his motive does not atone for the indiscretion of putting it into so reprehensible a form. Milton's example will, perhaps, be pleaded in his vindication; but Milton alone has ever founded a fiction on the basis of revelation, without degrading his subject. He alone has succeeded in carrying his readers into the spiritual world. No other attempt of the

kind has ever appeared that can be read without a constant feeling of something like burlesque, and a wish that the Tartarus and Elysium of the idolatrous Greeks should still be the hell and the heaven of poetry. A smile at the puerilities, and a laugh at the absurdity of the poet, might then be enjoyed by the reader, without an apprehension that he was guilty of profanity in giving it. Milton has been blamed by the most judicious critics, and his warmest admirers, for expressing the counsels of Eternal Wisdom, and the decrees of Almighty Power, by words assigned to the Deity. It offends against poetical propriety and poetical probability. It is impossible to deceive ourselves into a momentary and poetical belief that words proceeded from the Holy Spirit, except on the warrant of inspiration itself. It is here only that Milton fails, and Milton sometimes shocks. The language and conduct ascribed by Milton to his inferior spirits accord so well with our conceptions and belief respecting their nature and existence, that in many places we forget that they are, in any respect, the creatures of imagination. The blasphemies of Milton's devils offend not a pious ear, because they are devils who utter them. Nor are we displeased with the poet's presumption in feigning language for heavenly spirits, because it is a language that lifts the souls to heaven; and we more than believe, we know and feel, that, whatever may be the nature of the language of angels, the language of the poet truly interprets their sentiments. The words are human, but the truths they express, and the doctrines they teach, are divine. Nothing of the same kind can be said of *any* other fable, serious or ludicrous, pious or profane, that has yet been written in any age or language. — *Blackwood*, 1822.

205. The "Vision of Judgment" appeared, as has been already said, in the *Liberal* — a journal which, consisting chiefly of pieces by the late Mr. Hazlitt and Mr. Leigh Hunt, was not saved from ruin by a few contributions, some of the highest merit, by Lord Byron. In his work, entitled "Lord Byron and his Contemporaries," Mr. Hunt assaulted the dead poet, with reference to this unhappy journal; and his charges were thus taken to pieces at the time in the *Quarterly Review*:

"Mr. Hunt describes himself as pressed by Lord Byron into

the undertaking of that hapless magazine: Lord Byron, on the contrary, represents himself as urged to the service by the Messrs. Hunt themselves; *e. g.* —

"'Genoa, Oct. 9, 1822. — I am afraid the journal *is* a bad business, and won't do, but in it I am sacrificing myself for others. *I* can have no advantage in it. I believe the *brothers Hunts* to be honest men; I am sure that they are poor ones; they have not a Nap. They *pressed me to engage in this work, and in an evil hour I consented: still I shall not repent if I can do them the least service.* I have done all I can for Leigh Hunt since he came here, but it is almost useless: his wife is ill; his six children not very tractable; and in affairs of this world he himself is a perfect child. The death of Shelley left them totally aground; and I could not see them in such a state without using the common feelings of humanity, and what means were in my power to set them afloat again.'

"Again — Mr. Hunt represents Lord Byron as dropping his connection with the *Liberal*, partly because his friends at home (Messrs. Moore, Hobhouse, Murray, etc.) told him it was a discreditable one, and partly because the business did not turn out lucrative.

"'It is a mistake to suppose that he was not mainly influenced by the expectation of profit. He expected very large returns from the *Liberal*. Readers in these days need not be told that periodical works which have a large sale are a mine of wealth: Lord Byron had calculated that matter well.' — *Lord Byron and his Contemporaries*, p. 50.

"'The failure of the large profits — the non-appearance of the golden visions he had looked for, of the *Edinburgh* or *Quarterly* returns — of the solid and splendid proofs of this new country, which he should conquer in the regions of notoriety, to the dazzling of all men's eyes and his own — this it was — this was the bitter disappointment which made him determine to give way.' — *Ibid.* p. 51.

"Now let us hear Lord Byron himself:

"'Genoa, 9^{bre} 18th, 1822. — They will, of course, attribute motives of all kinds; but I shall not abandon a man like Hunt because he is unfortunate. Why, I could have no *pecuniary* motives, and, least of all, in connection with Hunt.'

"'Genoa, 10bre 25th, 1822. — Now do you see what you and your friends do by your injudicious rudeness? actually cement a sort of connection which you strove to prevent, and which, had the Hunts *prospered*, would not, in all probability, have continued. As it is, I will not quit them in their adversity, though it should cost me character, fame, money, and the usual et cetera. My original motives I already explained (in the letter which you thought proper to show); they are the *true* ones, and I abide by them, as I tell you, and I told Leigh Hunt, when he questioned me on the subject of that letter. He was violently hurt, and never will forgive me at the bottom; but I cannot help that. I never meant to make a parade of it; but if he chose to question me, I could only answer the plain truth, and I confess I did not see anything in the letter to hurt him, unless I said he was "a *bore*," which I don't remember. Had this journal gone on well, and I could have aided to make it better for them, I should then have left them after a safe pilotage off a lee shore to make a prosperous voyage by themselves. As it is, I can't, and would not if I could, leave them among the breakers. As to any community of feeling, thought, or opinion, between Leigh Hunt and me, there is little or none. We meet rarely, hardly ever; but I think him a good-principled and able man, and must do as I would be done by. I do not know what world he has lived in; but I have lived in three or four, but none of them like his Keats-and-Kangaroo terra incognita. Alas! poor Shelley! how we would have laughed had he lived! and how we used to laugh now and then at various things which are grave in the suburbs.'"

The Reviewer proceeds to comment on Mr. Hunt's general abuse of Lord Byron's manners, habits, and conversation, in these terms:

"The witness is, in our opinion, disqualified to give evidence upon any such subjects: his book proves him to be equally ignorant of what manners are, and incompetent to judge what manners ought to be: his elaborate portraiture of his own habits is from beginning to end a very caricature of absurdity; and the man who wrote this book, studiously cast, as the whole language of it is, in a free and easy, conversa-

tional tone, has no more right to decide about the conversation of such a man as Lord Byron, than has a pert apprentice to pronounce *ex cathedrâ* — from his one shilling gallery, to wit — on the dialogue of a polite comedy. We can easily believe that Lord Byron never talked his best when this was his *Companion*. We can also believe that Lord Byron's serious conversation, even in its lowest tone, was often unintelligible to Mr. Leigh Hunt. We are morally certain that in such company Lord Byron talked, very often indeed, for the mere purpose of amusing himself at the expense of his ignorant, fantastic, lackadaisical guest; that he considered the Magnus Apollo of Paradise Row as a precious butt, and acted accordingly. We therefore consider Mr. Hunt's evidence as absolutely inadmissible, on strong *preliminary* grounds. But what are we to say to it, when we find it, as we do, totally and diametrically at variance both with the substance and complexion of Lord Byron's epistolary correspondence; and with the oral testimonies of men whose talents, originally superior beyond all possibility of measurement to Mr. Hunt's, have been matured and perfected by study, both of books and men, such as Mr. Hunt never even dreamed of; who had the advantage of meeting Lord Byron on terms of perfect equality to all intents and purposes; and who, qualified, as they probably were, above any of their contemporaries, to appreciate Lord Byron, whether as a poet, or as a man of high rank and pre-eminent fame, mingling in the world in society such as he ought never to have sunk below, all with one voice pronounce an opinion exactly and in every particular, as well as looking to things broadly and to the general effect, the reverse of that which this unworthy and ungrateful dependent has thought himself justified in promulgating, on the plea of a penury which no Lord Byron survives to relieve? It is too bad, that he who has, in his own personal conduct, as well as in his writings, so much to answer for — who abused great opportunities and great talents so lamentably — who sinned so deeply, both against the society to which he belonged and the literature in which his name will ever hold a splendid place — it is really too bad, that Lord Byron, in addition to the grave condemnation of men able to appreciate both his merits and

his demerits, and well disposed to think more in sorrow than in anger of the worst errors that existed along with so much that was excellent and noble — it is by much too bad that this great man's glorious though melancholy memory

> "'Must also bear the vile attacks
> Of ragged curs and vulgar hacks'

whom he fed; — that his bones must be scraped up from their bed of repose to be at once grinned and howled over by creatures who, even in the least hyena-like of their moods, can touch nothing that mankind would wish to respect without polluting it."

Mr. Moore's verses on Mr. Hunt's work must not be omitted here.

"Next week will be published (as 'Lives' are the rage)
The whole Reminiscences, wondrous and strange,
Of a small puppy-dog, that lived once in the cage
Of the late noble lion at Exeter 'Change.

"Though the dog is a dog of the kind they call 'sad,'
'Tis a puppy that much to good breeding pretends;
And few dogs have such opportunities had
Of knowing how lions behave — among friends.

"How that animal eats, how he moves, how he drinks,
Is all noted down by this Boswell so small;
And 'tis plain, from each sentence, the puppy-dog thinks
That the lion was no such great things after all.

"Though he roared pretty well — this the puppy allows —
It was all, he says, borrowed — all second-hand roar;
And he vastly prefers his own little bow-wows
To the loftiest war-note the lion could pour.

"'Tis, indeed, as good fun as a *Cynic* could ask,
To see how this cockney-bred setter of rabbits
Takes gravely the lord of the forest to task,
And judges of lions by puppy-dog habits.

"Nay, fed as he was (and this makes it a dark case)
With sops every day from the lion's own pan,
He lifts up his leg at the noble beast's carcass,
And — does all a dog, so diminutive, can.

"However, the book's a good book, being rich in
Examples and warnings to lions high-bred,
How they suffer small mongrelly curs in their kitchen,
Who'll feed on them living, and foul them when dead."

206. I quote my own words, written in 1809.

207. A friend of Lord Byron's, who was with him at Ravenna when he wrote these stanzas, says: "They were composed, like many others, with no view of publication, but merely to relieve himself in a moment of suffering. He had been painfully excited by some circumstances which appeared to make it necessary that he should immediately quit Italy; and in the day and the hour that he wrote the song was labouring under an access of fever."

208. V. L. —"That sped his Spring."

209. V. L. —"One last embrace, then, and bid good night."

210. These lines were written on reading in the newspapers that Lady Byron had been patroness of a ball in aid of some charity at Hinckley.

211. In Lord Byron's MS. Diary of the preceding day, we find the following entry: "January 21, 1821. Dined — visited — came home — read. Remarked on an anecdote in Grimm's Correspondence, which says that 'Regnard et la plûpart des poëtes comiques étaient gens bilieux et melancoliques; et que M. de Voltaire, qui est très-gai, n'a jamais fait que des tragédies — et que la comédie gaie est le seul genre où il n'ait point réussi. C'est que celui qui rit et celui qui fait rire sont deux hommes fort différens!' At this moment I feel as bilious as the best comic writer of them all (even as Regnard himself, the next to Molière, who has written some of the best comedies in any language, and who is supposed to have committed suicide), and am not in spirits to continue my proposed tragedy. To-morrow is my birthday — that is to say,

at twelve o' the clock, midnight; *i.e.* in twelve minutes, I shall have completed thirty and three years of age! — and I go to my bed with a heaviness of heart at having lived so long, and to so little purpose. . . . It is three minutes past twelve — ''Tis the middle of night by the castle-clock,' and I am now thirty-three!

> "'Eheu, fugaces, Posthume, Posthume,
> Labuntur anni; —'

but I don't regret them so much for what I have done, as for what I might have done."

212. The procession of the Brasiers to Brandenburgh House was one of the most absurd fooleries of the time of the late queen's trial.

213. There is an epigram for you, is it not? — worthy

> Of Wordsworth, the grand metaquizzical poet,
> A man of vast merit, though few people know it;
> The perusal of whom (as I told you at Mestri)
> I owe, in great part, to my passion for pastry.
> — *B. Letters*, January 22, 1821.

214. Horace Walpole's Memoirs of the last nine years of the reign of George II.

215. Memoirs by James Earl Waldegrave, governor of George III. when Prince of Wales.

216. Can't accept your courteous offer. These matters must be arranged with Mr. Douglas Kinnaird. He is my trustee, and a man of honour. To him you can state all your mercantile reasons, which you might not like to state to me personally, such as "heavy season" — "flat public" — "don't go off" — "lordship writes too much" — "won't take advice" — "declining popularity" — "deduction for the trade" — "make very little" — "generally lose by him" — "pirated edition" — "foreign edition" — "severe criticisims," etc., with other hints and howls for an oration, which I leave Douglas, who is an orator, to answer. — *Lord B. to Mr. M.*, Aug. 23, 1821.

END OF VOLUME VI.

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